THE

LIVES

OF THE MOST EMINENT

ENGLISH POETS;

WITH

CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS

ON THEIR

WORKS.

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED.

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PRIOR.

MATHEW PRIOR is one of thoſe that have burſt out from an obſcure original to great eminence. He was born July 21, 1664, according to ſome, at Winburne, in Dorſetſhire, of I know not what parents; others ſay that he was the ſon of a Joiner of London: he was perhaps willing enough to leave his birth unſettled*, in hope, like Don Quixote, that the hiſtorian of his actions might find him ſome illuſtrious alliance.

He is ſuppoſed to have fallen, by his father's death into the hands of his uncle, a vintner near Charing-croſs, who ſent him for ſome time to Dr. Buſby at Weſtminſter; but not intending to give him any education beyond that of the ſchool, took him, when he was well advanced in literature, to his own houſe; where the earl of Dorſet, celebrated for patronage of genius, found him by chance, as Burnet relates, reading Horace, and was ſo well pleaſed with his proficiency, that he undertook the care and coſt of his academical education.

He entered his name in St. John's College at Cambridge in 1682, in his eighteenth year; and it may be reaſonably ſuppoſed that he was diſtinguiſhed among his contemporaries. He became a Batchelor, as is uſual, in four years;

* *The difficulty of ſettling Prior's birth-place is great. In the regiſter of his College he is called, at his admiſſion by the Preſident,* Matthew Prior *of* Winburn *in* Middleſex *; by himſelf next day,* Matthew Prior *of* Dorſetſhire, *in which county, not in Middleſex,* Winborn *or* Winborne, *as it ſtands in the* Villare, *is found. When he ſtood candidate for his fellowſhip, five years afterwards, he was regiſtered again by himſelf as of* Middleſex. *The laſt record ought to be preferred, becauſe it was made upon oath. It is obſervable, that, as a native of* Winborne, *he is ſtiled* Filius Georgii Prior, generoſi; *not conſiſtently with the common account of the meanneſs of his birth.*

and in two years afterwards wrote the poem on the *Deity*, which ſtands firſt in his volume.

It is the eſtabliſhed practice of that College to ſend every year to the earl of Exeter ſome poems upon ſacred ſubjects, in acknowledgment of a benefaction enjoyed by them from the bounty of his anceſtor. On this occaſion were thoſe verſes written, which, though nothing is ſaid of their ſucceſs, ſeem to have recommended him to ſome notice; for his praiſe of the counteſs's muſic, and his lines on the famous picture of Seneca, afford reaſon for immagining that he was more or leſs converſant with that family.

The ſame year he publiſhed the *City Mouse and Country Mouse*, to ridicule Dryden's *Hind and Panther*, in conjunction with Mr. Montague. There is a ſtory * of great pain ſuffered, and of tears ſhed, on this occaſion, by Dryden, who thought it hard that *an old man ſhould be ſo treated by thoſe to whom he had always been civil.* By tales like theſe is the envy raiſed by ſuperior abilities every day gratified: when they are attacked, every one hopes to ſee them humbled; what is hoped is readily believed, and what is believed is confidently told. Dryden had been more accuſtomed to hoſtilities, than that ſuch enemies ſhould break his quiet; and if we can ſuppoſe him vexed, it would be hard to deny him ſenſe enough to conceal his uneaſineſs.

The *City Mouse and Country Mouse* procured its authors more ſolid advantages than the pleaſure of fretting Dryden; for they were both ſpeedily preferred. Montague, indeed, obtained the firſt notice, with ſome degree of diſcontent, as it ſeems, in Prior, who probably knew that his own part of the performance was the beſt. He had not, however, much reaſon to complain; for he came to London, and obtained ſuch notice, that (in 1691) he was ſent to the Congreſs at the Hague, as ſecretary to the embaſſy. In this aſſembly of princes and nobles, to which Europe has perhaps ſcarcely ſeen any thing equal, was formed the grand alliance againſt Lewis; which at laſt did not produce effects proportionate to the magnificence of the tranſaction.

The conduct of Prior, in this ſplendid initiation into public buſineſs, was ſo pleaſing to king William that he made him one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber; and

* *Spence.*

he is ſuppoſed to have paſſed ſome of the next years in the quiet cultivation of literature and poetry.

The death of Queen Mary (in 1695) produced a ſubject for all the writers: perhaps no funeral was ever ſo poetically attended. Dryden, indeed, as a man diſcountenanced and deprived, was ſilent; but ſcarcely any other maker of verſes omitted to bring his tribute of tuneful ſorrow. An emulation of elegy was univerſal. Maria's praiſe was not confined to the Engliſh language, but fills a great part of the *Musæ Anglicanæ*.

Prior, who was both a poet and a courtier, was too diligent to miſs this opportunity of reſpect. He wrote a long ode, which was preſented to the king, by whom it was not likely to be ever read.

In two years he was ſecretary to another embaſſy at the treaty of Ryſwick (in 1697); and next year had the ſame office at the court of France, where he is ſaid to have been conſidered with great diſtinction.

As he was one day ſurveying the apartments at Verſailles, being ſhewn the Victories of Lewis, painted by Le Brun, and aſked whether the king of England's palace had any ſuch decorations; *The monuments of my Master's actions*, ſaid he, *are to be seen every where but in his own house.* The pictures of Le Brun are not only in themſelves ſufficiently oſtentatious, but were explained by inſcriptions ſo arrogant, that Boileau and Racine thought it neceſſary to make them more ſimple.

He was in the following year at Loo with the king; from whom, after a long audience, he carried orders to England, and upon his arrival became under-ſecretary of ſtate in the earl of Jerſey's office; a poſt which he did not retain long, becauſe Jerſey was removed; but he was ſoon made Commiſſioner of Trade.

This year (1700) produced one of the longeſt and moſt ſplendid compoſitions, the *Carmen Seculare*, in which he exhauſts all his powers of celebration. I mean not to accuſe him of flattery; he probably thought all that he writ, and retained as much veracity as can be properly exacted from a poet profeſſedly encomiaſtic. King William ſupplied copious materials for either verſe or proſe. His whole life had been action, and none ever denied him the reſplendent qualities of ſteady reſolution and perſonal courage. He was really in Prior's mind what he repreſents him in his verſes; he conſidered him as a hero, and was accuſtom-

ed to ſay, that he praiſed others in compliance with the faſhion, but that in celebrating king William he followed his inclination. To Prior gratitude would dictate praiſe, which reaſon would not refuſe.

Among the advantages to ariſe from the future years of William's reign, he mentions *Societies for useful Arts*, and among them,

> Some that with care true eloquence ſhall teach,
> And to juſt idioms fix our doubtful ſpeech;
> That from our writers diſtant realms may know
> The thanks we to our monarch owe,
> And ſchools profeſs our tongue through every land,
> That has invok'd his aid, or bleſs'd his hand.

Tickell, in his *Prospect of Peace*, has the ſame hope of a new academy:

> In happy chains our darling language bound,
> Shall ſport no more in arbitrary ſound.

Whether the ſimilitude of thoſe paſſages which exhibit the ſame thought on the ſame occaſion proceeded from accident or imitation, is not eaſy to determine. Tickell might have been impreſſed with his expectation by Swift's *Proposal for ascertaining the English Language*, then lately publiſhed.

In the parliament that met in 1701, he was choſen repreſentative of Eaſt Grinſtead. Perhaps it was about this time that he changed his party; for he voted for the impeachment of thoſe lords who had perſuaded the king to the Partition-treaty, a treaty in which he had himſelf been miniſterially employed.

A great part of queen Anne's reign was a time of war, in which there was little employment for negotiators, and Prior had therefore leiſure to make or to poliſh verſes. When the battle of Blenheim called forth all the verſemen, Prior, among the reſt, took care to ſhew his delight in the increaſing honour of his country by an Epiſtle to Boileau.

He publiſhed, ſoon afterwards, a volume of poems, with the encomiaſtic character of his deceaſed patron the duke of Dorſet: it began with the College Exerciſe, and ended with the *Nut-brown Maid*.

The battle of Ramillies ſoon afterwards (in 1706) excited him to another effort of poetry. On this occaſion he had

fewer or leſs formidable rivals; and it would be not eaſy to name any other compoſition produced by that event which is now remembered.

Every thing has its day. Through the reigns of William and Anne no proſperous event paſſed undignified by poetry. In the laſt war, when France was diſgraced and overpowered in every quarter of the globe, when Spain, coming to her aſſiſtance, only ſhared her calamities, and the name of an Engliſhman was reverenced through Europe, no poet was heard amidſt the general acclamation; the fame of our counſellors and heroes was intruſted to the Gazetteer.

The nation in time grew weary of the war, and the queen grew weary of her miniſters. The war was burdenſome, and the miniſters were inſolent. Harley and his friends began to hope that they might, by driving the Whigs from court and from power, gratify at once the queen and the people. There was now a call for writers, who might convey intelligence of paſt abuſes, and ſhew the waſte of public money, the unreaſonable *Conduct of the Allies*, the avarice of generals, the tyranny of minions, and the general danger of approaching ruin.

For this purpoſe a paper called the *Examiner* was periodically publiſhed, written, as it happened, by any wit of the party, and ſometimes as is ſaid by Mrs Manley. Some are owned by Swift; and one, in ridicule of Garth's verſes to Godolphin upon the loſs of his place, was written by Prior, and anſwered by Addiſon, who appears to have known the author either by conjecture or intelligence.

The Tories, who were now in power, were in haſte to end the war; and Prior, being recalled (1710) to his former employment of making treaties, was ſent (July 1711) privately to Paris with propoſitions of peace. He was remembered at the French court; and, returning in about a mouth, brought with him the Abbe Gaultier, and M. Meſnager a miniſter from France, inveſted with full powers.

This tranſaction not being avowed, Mackay the maſter of the Dover packet-boat, either zealouſly or officiouſly, ſeized Prior and his aſſociates at Canterbury. It is eaſily ſuppoſed that they were ſoon releaſed.

The negotiation was begun at Prior's houſe, where the Queen's miniſters met Meſnager (September 20, 1711,) and entered privately upon the great buſineſs. The im-

portance of Prior appears from the mention made of him by St. John in his Letter to the Queen.

"My Lord Treaſurer moved, and all my Lords were of the ſame opinion, that Mr. Prior ſhould be added to thoſe who are empowered to ſign; the reaſon for which is, becauſe he, having perſonally treated with Monſieur de Torcy, is the beſt witneſs we can produce of the ſenſe in which the general preliminary engagements are entered into: beſides which, as he is the beſt verſed in matters of trade of all your Majeſty's ſervants who have been truſted in this ſecret, if you ſhall think fit to employ him in the future treaty of commerce, it will be of conſequence that he has been a party concerned in concluding that convention, which muſt be the rule of this treaty."

The aſſembly of this important night was in ſome degree clandeſtine, the deſign of treating not being yet openly declared, and, when the Whigs returned to power, was aggravated to a charge of high treaſon; though, as Prior remarks in his imperfect anſwer to the Report of the *Committee of Secrecy*, no treaty ever was made without private interviews and preliminary diſcuſſions.

My buſineſs is not the hiſtory of the peace, but the life of Prior. The conferences began at Utrecht on the firſt of January (1711-12,) and the Engliſh plenipotentiaries arrived on the fifteenth. The miniſters of the different potentates conferred and conferred; but the peace advanced ſo ſlowly, that ſpeedier methods were found neceſſary, and Bolingbroke was ſent to Paris to adjuſt differences with leſs formality; Prior either accompanied him or followed him; and after his departure had the appointment and authority of an ambaſſador, though no public character.

By ſome miſtake of the Queen's orders, the court of France had been diſguſted; and Bolingbroke ſays in his Letter, "Dear Mat, hide the nakedneſs of thy country, and give the beſt turn thy fertile brain will furniſh thee with to the blunders of thy countrymen, who are not much better politicians than the French are poets."

Soon after the duke of Shrewſbury went on a formal embaſſy to Paris. It is related by Boyer, that the intention was to have joined Prior in the ſame commiſſion, but that Shrewſbury refuſed to be aſſociated with a man ſo meanly born. Prior therefore continued to act without a title till the duke returned next year to England, and then he aſſumed the ſtyle and dignity of ambaſſador.

But, while he continued in appearance a private man, he was treated with confidence by Lewis, who ſent him with a letter to the Queen, written in favour of the elector of Bavaria. "I ſhall expect," ſays he, "with impatience, the return of Mr. Prior, whoſe conduct is very agreeable to me." And while the duke of Shrewſbury was ſtill at Paris, Bolingbroke wrote to Prior thus: "Monſieur de Torcy has a confidence in you; make uſe of it, once for all, upon this occaſion, and convince him thoroughly, that we muſt give a different turn to our parliament and our people, according to their reſolution at this criſis."

Prior's public dignity and ſplendour commenced in Auguſt 1713, and continued till the Auguſt following; but I am afraid that, according to the uſual fate of greatneſs, it was attended with ſome perplexities and mortifications. He had not all that is cuſtomarily given to ambaſſadors: he hints to the Queen, in an imperfect poem, that he had no ſervice of plate; and it appeared, by the debts which he contracted, that his remittances were not punctually made.

On the firſt of Auguſt 1714, enſued the downfall of the Tories and the degradation of Prior. He was recalled; but was not able to return, being detained by the debts which he had found it neceſſary to contract, and which were not diſcharged before March, though his old friend Montague was now at the head of the treaſury.

He returned then as ſoon as he could, and was welcomed on the 25th of March by a warrant, but was, however, ſuffered to live in his own houſe, under the cuſtody of the meſſenger, till he was examined before a committee of the Privy Council, of which Mr. Walpole was chairman, and lord Coningſby, Mr. Stanhope, and Mr. Lechmere, were the principal interrogators; who, in this examination, of which there is printed an account not unentertaining, behaved with the boiſterouſneſs of men elated by recent authority. They are repreſented as aſking queſtions ſometimes vague, ſometimes inſidious, and writing anſwers different from thoſe which they received. Prior, however, ſeems to have been overpowered by their turbulence; for he confeſſes that he ſigned what, if he had ever come before a legal judicature, he ſhould have contradicted or explained away. The oath was adminiſtered by Boſcawen, a Middleſex juſtice, who at laſt was going to write his atteſtation on the wrong ſide of the paper.

They were very induſtrious to find ſome charge againſt Oxford, and aſked Prior, with great earneſtneſs, who was preſent when the preliminary articles were talked of or ſigned at his houſe? He told them, that either the earl of Oxford or the duke of Shrewſbury was abſent, but he could not remember which; an anſwer which perplexed them, becauſe it ſupplied no accuſation againſt either. "Could any thing be more abſurd," ſays he, "or more inhuman, than to propoſe to me a queſtion, by the anſwering of which I might, according to them, prove myſelf a traitor? And notwithſtanding their ſolemn promiſe, that nothing which I could ſay ſhould hurt myſelf, I had no reaſon to truſt them: for they violated that promiſe about five hours after. However, I owned I was there preſent. Whether this was wiſely done or no, I leave to my friends to determine."

When he had ſigned the paper, he was told by Walpole, that the committee were not ſatisfied with his behaviour, nor could give ſuch an account of it to the Commons as might merit favour; and that they now thought a ſtricter confinement neceſſary than to his own houſe. "Here," ſays he, "Boſcawen played the moraliſt, and Coningſby the chriſtian, but both very awkwardly." The meſſenger, in whoſe cuſtody he was to be placed, was then called, and very decently aſked by Coningſby, *if his house was secured by bars and bolts?* The meſſenger anſwered, *No* with aſtoniſhment; at which Coningſby very angrily ſaid, *Sir, you must secure this prisoner: it is for the safety of the nation: if he escape, you shall answer for it.*

They had already printed their report; and in this examination were endeavouring to find proofs.

He continued thus confined for ſome time; and Mr. Walpole (June 10, 1715) moved for an impeachment againſt him. What made him ſo acrimonious does not appear: he was by nature no thirſter for blood. Prior was a week after committed to cloſe cuſtody, with orders that *no person should be admitted to see him without leave from the speaker.*

When, two years after, an Act of Grace was paſſed, he was excepted, and continued ſtill in cuſtody, which he had made leſs tedious by writing his *Alma.* He was, however, ſoon after diſcharged.

He had now his liberty, but he had nothing elſe. Whatever the profit of his employment might have been, he had

always ſpent it: and at the age of fifty-three was, with all his abilities, in danger of penury, having yet no ſolid revenue but from the fellowſhip of his college, which, when in his exaltation he was cenſured for retaining it, he ſaid, he could live upon at laſt.

Being however generally known and eſteemed, he was encouraged to add other poems to thoſe which he had printed, and publiſh them by ſubſcription. The expedient ſucceeded by the induſtry of many friends, who circulated the propoſals*, and the care of ſome, who, it is ſaid, withheld the money from him, leſt he ſhould ſquander it. The price of the volume was two guineas; the whole collection was four thouſand; to which lord Harley, the ſon of the earl of Oxford, to whom he had invariably adhered, added an equal ſum for the purchaſe of Down-hall, which Prior was to enjoy during life, and Harley after his deceaſe.

He had now, what wits and philoſophers have often wiſhed, the power of paſſing the day in contemplative tranquillity. But it ſeems that buſy men ſeldom live long in a ſtate of quiet. It is not unlikely that his health declined. He complains of deafneſs; *for*, ſays he, *I took little care of my ears while I was not sure if my head was my own.*

Of any occurrences in his remaining life I have found no account. In a letter to Swift, "I have," ſays he, "treated lady Harriot at cambridge. A Fellow of a College treat! and ſpoke verſes to her in a gown and cap! What, the plenipotentiary, ſo far concerned in the damned peace at Utrecht! the man that makes up half the volume of terſe proſe, that makes up the report of the committee, ſpeaking verſes! *Sic est homo sum.*"

He died at *Wimpole*, a ſeat of the earl of Oxford, on the eighteenth of September 1721, and was buried in Weſtminſter; where on a monument, for which, as the *last piece of human vanity*, he left five hundred pounds, is engraven this epitaph:

Sui Temporis Hiſtoriam meditanti,
Paulatim obrepens Febris
Operi ſimul & Vitæ filum abrupit,
Sept. 18. An. Dom. 1721. Ætat. 57.

* *Swift obtained* many *ſubſcriptions for him in Ireland*

H. S. E.
Vir Eximius
Sereniſſimis
Regi GULIELMO Reginæque MARIÆ
In Congreſſione Fœderatorum
Hagæ anno 1690 celebrata,
Deinde Magnæ Britanniæ Legatis
Tum iis,
Qui anno 1697 Pacem RYSWICKI confecerunt,
Tum iis,
Qui apud Gallos annis proximis Legationem obierunt;
Eodem etiam anno 1697 in Hibernia
SECRETARIUS;
Nec non in utroque Honorabili conſeſſu
Eorum,
Qui anno 1700 ordinandis Commercii negotiis,
Quique anno 1711 dirigendis Portorii rebus,
Præfidebant,
COMMISSIONARIUS;
Poſtremo
Ab ANNA
Feliciſſimæ memoriæ Regina
Ad LUDOVICUM XIV. Galliæ Regem
Miſſus anno 1711
De Pace ſtabilienda,
(Pace etiamnum durante
Diuque ut boni jam omnes ſperant duratura)
Cum ſumma poteſtate Legatus.
MATTHÆUS PRIOR Armiger;
Qui
Hos omnes, quibus cumulatus eſt, Titulos
Humanitatis, Ingenii, Eruditionis laude
Superavit;
Cui enim naſcenti faciles arriſerant Muſæ.
Hunc Puerum Schola hic Regia perpolivit,
Juvenem in Collegio Sti. Johannis
Cantabrigia optimis Scientiis inſtruxit;
Virum denique auxit; & perfecit
Multa cum viris Principibus conſuetudo;
Ita natus, ita inſtitutus,
A Vatum Choro avelli nunquam potuit,
Sed ſolebat ſæpe rerum Civilium gravitatem
Amœniorum Literarum Studiis condire:
Et cum omne adeo Poetices genus
Haud infeliciter tentaret,
Tum in Fabellis concinne lepideque texendis
Mirus Artifex
Neminem habuit parem.
Hæc liberalis animi oblectamenta;

Quam nullo Illi labore conſtiterint,
Facile ii perſpexere, quibus uſus eſt Amici;
Apud quos Urbanitatum & Leporum plenus
Cum ad rem, quæcunque forte inciderat,
Apte varie copioſeque alluderet,
Interea nihil quæſitum, nihil vi expreſſum
Videbatur,
Sed omnia ultro effluere,
Et quaſi jugi e fonte affatim exuberare,
Ita Suos tandem dubios reliquit,
Effetue in Scriptis, Poeta Elegantior,
An in Convictu, Comes Jucundior.

Of Prior, eminent as he was, both by his abilities and ſtation, very few memorials have been left by his contemporaries; the account therefore muſt now be deſtitute of his private character and familiar practices. He lived at a time when the rage of party detected all which it was any man's intereſt to hide; and as little ill is heard of Prior, it is certain that not much was known. He was not afraid of provoking cenſure; for when he forſook the Whigs*, under whoſe patronage he firſt entered the world, he became a Tory ſo ardent and determinate, that he did not willingly conſort with men of different opinions. He was one of the ſixteen Tories who met weekly, and agreed to addreſs each other by the title of *Brother;* and ſeems to have adhered, not only by concurrence of political deſigns, but by peculiar affection, to the earl of Oxford and his family. With how much confidence he was truſted, has been already told.

He was however, in Pope's opinion, fit only to make verſes, and leſs qualified for buſineſs than Addiſon himſelf. This was ſurely ſaid without conſideration. Addiſon, exalted to a high place, was forced into degradation by the ſenſe of his own incapacity; Prior, who was employed by men very capable of eſtimating his value, having been ſecretary to one embaſſy, had, when great abilities were again wanted, the ſame office another time; and was, after ſo much experience of his knowledge and dexterity, at laſt ſent to tranſact a negotiation in the higheſt degree arduous and important; for which he was qualified, among other requiſites in the opinion of Bolingbroke, by his influence upon the French miniſter, and by ſkill in queſtion of commerce above other men.

* *Spence.*

Of his behaviour in the lighter parts of life, it is too late to get much intelligence. One of his anſwers to a boaſtful Frenchman has been related, and to an impertinent he made another equally proper. During his embaſſy, he ſat at the opera by a man, who, in his rapture, accompanied with his own voice the principal ſinger. Prior fell to railing at the performer with all the terms of reproach that he could collect, till the Frenchman, ceaſing from his ſong, began to expoſtulate with him for his harſh cenſure of a man who was confeſſedly the ornament of the ſtage. "I know all that," ſays the ambaſſador, "*mais il chante si haut, que je ne scaurois vous entendre.*"

In a gay French company, where every one ſung a little ſong or ſtanza, of which the burden was, *Bannissons la Melancholie:* when it came to his turn to ſing, after the performance of a young lady that ſat next him, he produced theſe extemporary lines:

Mais celle voix, et ces beaux yeux,
Font Cupidon trop dangereux,
Et je ſuis triſte quand je crie
Banniſſons la Melancholie.

Tradition repreſents him as willing to deſcend from the dignity of the poet and the ſtateſman to the low delights of mean company. His Chloe probably was ſometimes ideal; but the woman with whom he co-habited was a deſpicable drab * of the loweſt ſpecies. One of his wenches, perhaps Chloe, while he was abſent from his houſe, ſtole his plate, and ran away; as was related by a woman who had been his ſervant. Of this propenſity to ſordid converſe I have ſeen an account ſo ſeriouſly ridiculous, that it ſeems to deſerve inſertion †.

"I have been aſſured that Prior, after having ſpent the evening with Oxford, Bolingbroke, Pope, and Swift, would go and ſmoke a pipe, and drink a bottle of ale, with a common ſoldier and his wife, in Long-Acre, before he went to bed; not from any remains of the lowneſs of his original, as one ſaid, but, I ſuppoſe, that his faculties

"——Strain'd to the height,
In that celeſtial colloquy ſublime,
Dazzled and ſpent, ſunk down, and ſought repair."

Poor Prior! why was he ſo *strained*, and in ſuch *want* of *repair*, after a converſation with men not, in the opinion

* *Spence.* † *Richardsoniana.*

of the world, much wiſer than himſelf? But ſuch are the conceits of ſpeculatiſts, who *strain* their *faculties;* to find in a mine what lies upon the ſurface.

His opinions, ſo far as the means of judging are left us, ſeem to have been right; but his life was, it ſeems, irregular, negligent, and ſenſual.

PRIOR has written with great variety, and his variety has made him popular. He has tried all ſtyles, from the groteſque to the ſolemn, and has not ſo failed in any as to incur deriſion or diſgrace.

His works may be diſtinctly conſidered as compriſing Tales, Love-verſes, Occaſional Poems, Alma, and Solomon.

His Tales have obtained general approbation, being written with great familiarity and great ſpritelineſs: the language is eaſy, but ſeldom groſs, and the numbers ſmooth, without appearance of care. Of theſe Tales there are only four. The *Ladle*, which is introduced by a Preface, neither neceſſary nor pleaſing, neither grave nor merry. *Paulo Purganti;* which has likewiſe a Preface, but of more value than the tale. *Hans Carval*, not over decent; and *Protogenes* and *Apelles*, an old ſtory, mingled, by an affectation not diſagreeable, with modern images. The *Young Gentleman in Love*, has hardly a juſt claim to the title of *a Tale*. I know not whether he be the original author of any Tale which he has given us.

The adventure of *Hans Carvel* has paſſed through many ſucceſſions of merry wits; for it is to be found in Arioſto's Satires, and is perhaps yet older. But the merit of ſuch ſtories is the art of telling them.

In his Amarous Effuſions he is leſs happy; for they are not dictated by nature or by paſſion, and have neither gallantry nor tenderneſs. They have the coldneſs of Cowley, without his wit, the dull exerciſes of a ſkilful verſifyer, reſolved at all adventures to write ſomething about Chloe, and trying to be amorous by dint of ſtudy. His fictions therefore are mythological. Venus, after the example of the Greek Epigram, aſks when ſhe was ſeen *naked and bathing*. Then *Cupid* is *miſtaken;* then *Cupid* is *diſarmed;* then he loſes his darts to *Ganymede;* then *Jupiter* ſends

him a ſummons by *Mercury*. Then *Chloe* goes a-hunting, with an *ivory quiver graceful at her ſide;* Diana miſtakes her for one of her nymphs, and Cupid laughs at the blunder. All this is ſurely deſpicable; and even when he tries to act the lover, without the help of gods or goddeſſes, his thoughts are unaffecting or remote. He talks not *like a man of this world.*

The greateſt of all his amorous eſſays is *Henry* and *Emma;* a dull and tedious dialogue, which excites neither eſteem for the man nor tenderneſs for the woman. The example of Emma, who reſolves to follow an outlawed murderer wherever fear and guilt ſhall drive him, deſerves no imitation; and the experiment by which Henry tries the lady's conſtancy, is ſuch as muſt end either in infamy to her, or in diſappointment to himſelf.

His Occaſional Poems neceſſarily loſt part of their value, as their occaſions, being leſs remembered, raiſed leſs emotion. Some of them, however, are preſerved by their inherent excellence. The burleſque of Boileau's Ode on Namur has, in ſome parts, ſuch airineſs and levity as will always procure it readers, even among thoſe who cannot compare it with the original. The Epiſtle to Boileau is not ſo happy. The Poems to the King are now peruſed only by young ſtudents, who read merely that they may learn to write; and of the *Carmen Seculare*, I cannot but ſuſpect that I might praiſe or cenſure it by caprice, without danger of detection; for who can be ſuppoſed to have laboured through it? Yet the time has been when this neglected work was ſo popular that it was tranſlated into Latin by no common maſter.

His Poem on the battle of Ramillies is neceſſarily tedious by the form of the ſtanza: an uniform maſs of ten lines, thirty-five times repeated, inconſequential and ſlightly connected, muſt weary both the ear and the underſtanding. His imitation of Spenſer, which conſiſts principally in *I ween* and *I weet*, without excluſion of later modes of ſpeech, makes his poem neither ancient nor modern. His mention of *Mars* and *Bellona*, and his compariſon of Marlborough to the Eagle that bears the thunder of *Jupiter*, are all puerile and unaffecting; and yet more deſpicable is the long tale told by *Lewis* in his deſpair, of *Brute and Troynovante*, and the teeth of *Cadmus*, with his ſimiles of the raven and eagle, and wolf and lion. By the help of ſuch eaſy fictions, and vulgar topics, without acquaintance

with life, and without knowledge of art or nature, a poem of any length, cold and lifeleſs like this, may be eaſily written on any ſubject.

In his Epilogues to *Phædra* and to *Lucius*, he is very happily facetious: but in the Prologue before the Queen, the pedant has found his way, with Minerva, Perſeus, and Andromeda.

His Epigrams and lighter pieces are, like thoſe of others, ſometimes elegant, ſometimes trifling, and ſometimes dull; among the beſt are the *Camelion*, and the epitaph on *John* and *Joan*.

Scarcely any one of our poets have written ſo much, and tranſlated ſo little: the verſion of Calimachus is ſufficiently licentious: the paraphraſe on St. Paul's Exhortation to Charity is eminently beautiful.

Alma is written in profeſſed imitation of Hudibras, and has at leaſt one accidental reſemblance: Hudibras wants a plan, becauſe it is left imperfect; Alma is imperfect, becauſe it ſeems never to have had a plan. Prior appears not to have propoſed to himſelf any drift or deſign but to have written the caſual dictates of the preſent moment.

What Horace ſaid when he imitated Lucilius, might be ſaid of Butler by Prior, his numbers were not ſmooth or neat: Prior excelled him in verſification, but he was, like Horace, *inventore minor;* he had not Butler's exubrance of matter and variety of illuſtration. The ſpangles of wit which he could afford, he knew how to poliſh; but he wanted the bullion of his maſter. Butler pours out a negligent profuſion, certain of the weight, but careleſs of the ſtamp. Prior has comparatively little, but with that little he makes a fine ſhew. Alma has many admirers, and was the only piece among Prior's works of which Pope ſaid that he ſhould wiſh to be the author.

Solomon is the work to which he entruſted the protection of his name, and which he expected ſucceeding ages to regard with veneration. His affection was natural; it had undoubtedly been written with great labour, and who is willing to think that he has been labouring in vain? He had infuſed into it much knowledge and much thought; had often poliſhed it to elegance, often dignified it with ſplendour, and ſometimes heightened it to ſublimity: he perceived in it many excellencies, and did not diſcover that it wanted that without which all others are of ſmall

avail, the power of engaging attention and alluring curiosity.

Tediouſneſs is the moſt fatal of all faults, negligences or errors are ſingle and local, but tediouſneſs pervades the whole; other faults are cenſured and forgotten, but the power of tediouſneſs propagates itſelf. He that is weary the firſt hour is more weary the ſecond; as bodies forced into motion, contrary to their tendency, paſs more and more ſlowly through every ſucceſſive interval of ſpace.

Unhappily this pernicious failure is that which an author is leaſt able to diſcover. We are ſeldom tireſome to ourſelves; and the act of compoſition fills and delights the mind with change of language and ſucceſſion of images; every couplet when produced is new, and novelty is the great ſource of pleaſure. Perhaps no man ever thought a line ſuperfluous when he firſt wrote it, or contracted his work till his ebullitions of invention had ſubſided. And even if he ſhould controul his deſire of immediate renown, and keep his work *nine years* unpubliſhed, he will be ſtill the author, and ſtill in danger of deceiving himſelf; and if he conſults his friends, he will probably find men who have more kindneſs than judgment, or more fear to offend than deſire to inſtruct.

The tediouſneſs of this poem proceeds not from the uniformity of the ſubject, for it is ſufficiently diverſified, but from the continued tenour of the narration; in which Solomon relates the ſucceſſive viciſſitudes of his own mind, without the intervention of any other ſpeaker, or the mention of any other agent, unleſs it be Abra; the reader is only to learn what he thought, and to be told that he thought wrong. The event of every experiment is foreſeen, and therefore the proceſs is not much regarded.

Yet the work is far from deſerving to be neglected. He that ſhall peruſe it will be able to mark many paſſages, to which he may recur for inſtruction or delight; many from which the poet may learn to write, and the philoſopher to reaſon.

If Prior's poetry be generally conſidered, his praiſe will be that of correctneſs and induſtry, rather than of compaſs of comprehenſion, or activity of fancy. He never made any effort of invention: his greater pieces are only tiſſues of common thoughts; and his ſmaller, which conſiſt of light images or ſingle conceits are not always his own. I have traced him among the French Epigrammatiſts, and

have been informed that he poached for prey among obſcure authors. The *Thief and the Cordelier* is, I ſuppoſe, generally conſidered as an original production; with how much juſtice this Epigram may tell, which was written by Georgius Sabinus, a poet now little known or read, though once the friend of Luther and Melanćthon:

De Sacerdote Furem conſolante.

Quidam ſacrificus furem comitatus euntem
Hæc ubi dat ſontes carnificina neci.
Ne ſis mœſtus, ait; ſummi conviva Tonantis
Jam cum cœlicolis (ſi modo credis) eris.
Ille gemens, ſi vera mihi ſolatia præbes,
Hoſpes apud ſuperos ſis meus oro, refert.
Sacrificus contra; mihi non convivia fas eſt
Ducere, jejunans hac edo luce nihil.

What he has valuable he owes to his diligence and his judgment. His diligence has juſtly placed him amongſt the moſt correct of the Engliſh poets; and he was one of the firſt that reſolutely endeavoured at correctneſs. He never ſacrifices accuracy to haſte, nor indulges himſelf in contemptuous negligence, or impatient idleneſs; he has no careleſs lines, or entangled ſeniments; his words are nicely ſelected, and his thoughts fully expanded. If this part of his character ſuffers any abatement, it muſt be from the diſproportion of his rhymes, which have not always ſufficient conſonance, and from the admiſſion of broken lines into his *Solomon:* but perhaps he thought, like Cowley, that hemiſtichs ought to be admitted into heroic poetry,

He had apparently ſuch rectitude of judgment as ſecured him from every thing that approached to the ridiculous or abſurd; but as laws operate in civil agency not to the excitement of virtue, but the repreſſion of wickedneſs, ſo judgment in the operations of intellect can hinder faults, but not produce excellence. Prior is never low, nor very often ſublime. It is ſaid by Longinus of Euripides, that he forces himſelf ſometimes into grandeur by violence of effort, as the lion kindles his fury by the laſhes of his own tail. Whatever Prior obtains above mediocrity ſeems the effort of ſtruggle and of toil. He has many vigorous but few happy lines; he has every thing by purchaſe, and

nothing by gift: he had no *nightly visitations* of the Muſe, no infuſions of ſentiment or felicities of fancy.

His diction, however, is more his own than that of any among the ſucceſſors of Dryden; he borrows no lucky turns, or commodious modes of language, from his predeceſſors. His phraſes are original, but they are ſometimes harſh; as he inherited no elegances, none has he bequeathed. His expreſſion has every mark of laborious ſtudy; the line ſeldom ſeems to have been formed at once; the words did not come till they were called, and were then put by conſtraint into their places, where they do their duty, but do it ſullenly. In his greater compoſitions there may be found more rigid ſtatelineſs than graceful dignity.

Of verſification he was not negligent: what he received from Dryden he did not loſe; neither did he increaſe the difficulty of writing, by unneceſſary ſeverity, but uſes Triplets and Alexandrines without ſcruple. In his Preface to *Solomon* he propoſes ſome improvements, by extending the ſenſe from one couplet to another, with variety of pauſes. This he has attempted, but without ſucceſs; his interrupted lines are unpleaſing, and his ſenſe as leſs diſtinct is leſs ſtriking.

He has altered the Stanza of Spenſer, as a houſe is altered by building another in its place of a different form. With how little reſemblance he has formed his new Stanza to that of his maſter, theſe ſpecimens will ſhew.

SPENSER.

She flying faſt from heav'n's hated face,
And from the world that her diſcover'd wide,
Fled to the waſteful wilderneſs apace,
From living eyes her open ſhame to hide,
And lurk'd in rocks and caves long uneſpy'd.
But that far crew of knights, and Una fair,
Did in that caſtle afterwards abide,
To truſt themſelves, and weary powers repair,
Where ſtore they found of all, that dainty was and rare.

PRIOR.

To the cloſe rock the frighted raven flies,
Soon as the riſing eagle cuts the air:
The ſhaggy wolf unſeen and trembling lies,
When the hoarſe roar proclaims the lion near.

Ill-ſtarr'd did we our forts and lines forſake,
To dare our Britiſh foes to open fight:
Our conqueſt we by ſtratagem ſhould make:
Our triumph had been founded in our flight.
'Tis ours, by craft and by ſurpriſe to gain:
'Tis theirs, to meet in arms, and battle in the plain.

By this new ſtructure of his lines he has avoided difficulties; nor am I ſure that he has loſt any of the power of pleaſing; but he no longer imitates Spenſer.

Some of his poems are written without regularity of meaſures; for, when he commenced poet, we had not recovered from our Pindaric infatuation; but he probably lived to be convinced that the eſſence of verſe is order and conſonance.

His numbers are ſuch as mere diligence may attain; they ſeldom offend the ear, and ſeldom ſooth it; they commonly want airineſs, lightneſs, and facility; what is ſmooth, is not ſoft. His verſes always roll, but they ſeldom flow.

A ſurvey of the life and writings of Prior may exemplify a ſentence which he doubtleſs underſtood well, when he read Horace at his uncle's; *the veſſel long retains the ſcent which it firſt receives.* In his private relaxation he revived the tavern, and in his amorous pedantry he exhibited the college. But on higher occaſions, and nobler ſubjects, when habit was overpowered by the neceſſity of reflection, he wanted not wiſdom as a ſtateſman, nor elegance as a poet.

CONGREVE.

WILLIAM CONGREVE deſcended from a family in Staffordſhire, of ſo great antiquity that it claims a place among the few that extend their line beyond the Norman Conqueſt; and was the ſon of William Congreve, ſecond ſon of Richard Congreve of Congreve and Stratton. He viſited, once at leaſt, the reſidence of his anceſtors; and, I believe, more places than one are ſtill ſhewn, in groves and gardens, where he is related to have written his *Old Batchelor*.

Neither the time nor place of his birth are certainly known: if the inſcription upon his monument be true, he was born in 1672. For the place; it was ſaid by himſelf that he owed his nativity to England, and by every body elſe that he was born in Ireland. Southern mentioned him with ſharp cenſure, as a man that meanly diſowned his native country. The biographers aſſign his nativity to Bardſa, near Leeds in Yorkſhire, from the account given by himſelf, as they ſuppoſe, to Jacob.

To doubt whether a man of eminence has told the truth about his own birth, is, in appearance, to be very deficient in candour; yet nobody can live long without knowing that falſehoods of convenience or vanity, falſehoods from which no evil immediately viſible enſues, except the general degradation of human teſtimony, are very lightly uttered, and once uttered, are ſullenly ſupported. Boileau, who deſired to be thought a rigorous and ſteady moraliſt, having told a petty lie to Lewis XIV. continued it afterwards by falſe dates; thinking himſelf obliged *in honour*, ſays his admirer, to mention what, when he ſaid it, was ſo well received.

Wherever Congreve was born, he was educated firſt at Kilkenny, and afterwards at Dublin, his father having ſome military employment that ſtationed him in Ireland: but after having paſſed through the uſual preparatory ſtudies, as may be reaſonably ſuppoſed with great celerity and

ſucceſs, his father thought it proper to aſſign him a profeſſion, by which ſomething might be gotten; and about the time of the Revolution ſent him, at the age of ſixteen, to ſtudy law in the Middle Temple, where he lived for ſeveral years, but with very little attention to Statutes or Reports.

His diſpoſition to become an author appeared very early, as he very early felt that force of imagination, and poſſeſſed that copiouſneſs of ſentiment, by which intellectual pleaſure can be given. His firſt performance was a novel, called *Incognita, or Love and Duty reconciled*: It is praiſed by the biographers, who quote ſome part of the preface, that is indeed, for ſuch a time of life, uncommonly judicious. I would rather praiſe it than read it.

His firſt dramatic labour was the *Old Batchelor;* of which he ſays, in his defence againſt Collier, "that comedy was written, as ſeveral know, ſome years before it was acted. When I wrote it, I had little thoughts of the ſtage; but did it to amuſe myſelf, in a ſlow recovery from a fit of ſickneſs. Afterwards, through my indiſcretion, it was ſeen, and in ſome little time more it was acted; and I, through the remainder of my indiſcretion, ſuffered myſelf to be drawn in, to the proſecution of a difficult and thankleſs ſtudy, and to be involved in a perpetual war with knaves and fools."

There ſeems to be a ſtrange affectation in authors of appearing to have done every thing by chance. The *Old Bachelor* was written for amuſement, in the langour of convaleſcence. Yet it is apparently compoſed with great elaborateneſs of dialogue, and inceſſant ambition of wit. The age of the writer conſidered, it is indeed a very wonderful performance; for, whenever written, it was acted (1693) when he was not more than twenty-one years old; and was then recommended by Mr. Dryden, Mr. Southern, and Mr. Maynwaring. Dryden ſaid that he never had ſeen ſuch a firſt play; but they found it deficient in ſome things requiſite to the ſucceſs of its exhibition, and by their greater experience fitted it for the ſtage. Southern uſed to relate of one comedy, probably of this, that when Congreve read it to the players, he pronounced it ſo wretchedly that they had almoſt rejected it; but they were afterwards ſo well perſuaded of its excellence, that, for half a year before it was acted, the manager allowed its author the privilege of the houſe.

Few plays have ever been ſo beneficial to the writer; for it procured him the patronage of Halifax, who immediately made him one of the commiſſioners for licenſing coachos, and ſoon after gave him a place in the pipe-office, and another in the cuſtoms of ſix hundred pounds a year. Congreve's converſation muſt ſurely have been at leaſt equally pleaſing with his writings.

Such a comedy, written at ſuch an age, requires ſome conſideration. As the lighter ſpecies of dramatic poetry profeſſes the imitation of common life, of real manners, and daily incidents, it apparently preſuppoſes a familiar knowledge of many characters, and exact obſervation of the paſſing world; the difficulty therefore is, to conceive how this knowledge can be obtained by a boy.

But if the *Old Batchelor* be more nearly examined, it will be found to be one of thoſe comedies which may be made by a mind vigorous and acute, and furniſhed with comic characters by the peruſal of other poets, without much actual commerce with mankind. The dialogue is one conſtant reciprocation of conceits, or claſh of wit, in which nothing flows neceſſarily from the occaſion, or is dictated by nature. The characters both of men and women are either fictitious and artificial, as thoſe of *Heartwell* and the Ladies; or eaſy and common, as *Wittol* a tame idiot, *Bluff* a ſwaggering coward, and *Fondlewife* a jealous puritan; and the cataſtrophe ariſes from a miſtake not very probably produced, by marrying a woman in a maſk.

Yet this gay comedy, when all theſe deductions are made, will ſtill remain the work of very powerful and fertile faculties: the dialogue is quick and ſparkling, the incidents ſuch as ſeize the attention, and the wit ſo exuberant that it *o'er informs its tenement.*

Next year he gave another ſpecimen of his abilities in *The Double Dealer*, which was not received with equal kindneſs. He writes to his patron the lord Halifax a dedication, in which he endeavours to reconcile the reader to that which found few friends among the audience. Theſe apologies are always uſeleſs; *de gustibus non est disputandum;* men may be convinced, but they cannot be pleaſed, againſt their will. But though taſte is obſtinate, it is very variable, and time often prevails when arguments have failed.

Queen Mary conferred upon both thoſe plays the honour of her preſence; and when ſhe died, ſoon after. Congreve teſtified his gratitude by a deſpicable effuſion of elegiac paſtoral; a compoſition in which all is unnatural, and yet nothing is new.

In another year (1695) his prolific pen produced *Love for Love;* a comedy of nearer alliance to life, and exhibiting more real manners, than either of the former. The character of *Foresight* was then common. Dryden calculated nativities; both Cromwell and King William had their lucky days; and Shaftſbury himſelf, though he had no religion, was ſaid to regard predictions. The *Sailor* is not accounted very natural, but he is very pleaſant.

With this play was opened the New Theatre, under the direction of Betterton the tragedian; where he exhibited two years afterwards (1697) *The Mourning Bride*, a tragedy, ſo written as to ſhew him ſufficiently qualified for either kind of dramatic poetry.

In this play, of which, when he afterwards reviſed it, he reduced the verſification to greater regularity, there is more buſtle than ſentiment; the plot is buſy and intricate, and the events take hold on the attention; but, except a very few paſſages, we are rather amuſed with noiſe, and perplexed with ſtratagem, than entertained with any true delineation of natural characters. This, however, was received with more benevolence than any other of his works, and ſtill continues to be acted and applauded.

But whatever objections may be made either to his comic or tragic excellence, they are loſt at once in the blaze of admiration, when it is remembered that he had produced theſe four plays before he had paſſed his twenty-fifth year; before other men, even ſuch as are ſome time to ſhine in eminence, have paſſed their probation of literature, or preſume to hope for any other notice than ſuch as is beſtowed on diligence and inquiry. Among all the efforts of early genius which literary hiſtory records, I doubt whether any one can be produced that more ſurpaſſes the common limits of nature than the plays of Congreve.

About this time began the long-continued controverſy between Collier and the poets. In the reign of Charles the Firſt, the Puritans had raiſed a violent clamour againſt the drama, which they conſidered as an entertainment not lawful to Chriſtians, an opinion held by them in common with the church of Rome; and Prynne publiſhed *Histrio-mastix*,

a huge volume, in which ſtage-plays were cenſured. The outrages and crimes of the Puritans brought afterwards their whole ſyſtem of doctrine into diſrepute, and from the Reſtoration the poets and the players were left at quiet; for to have moleſted them would have had the appearance of tendency to puritanical malignity.

The danger, however, was worn away by time; and Collier, a fierce and implacable Nonjuror, knew that an attack upon the theatre would never make him ſuſpected for a Puritan; he therefore (1698) publiſhed *A short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, I believe with no other motive than religious zeal and honeſt indignation. He was formed for a controvertiſt; with ſufficient learning; with diction vehement and pointed, though often vulgar and incorrect; with unconquerable pertinacity; with wit in the higheſt degree keen and ſarcaſtic; and with all thoſe powers exalted and invigorated by juſt confidence in his cauſe.

Thus qualified, and thus incited, he walked out to battle, and aſſailed at once moſt of the living writers, from Dryden to Durfey. His onſet was violent: thoſe paſſages, which while they ſtood ſingle had paſſed with little notice, when they were accumulated and expoſed together, excited horror; the wife and the pious caught the alarm, and the nation wondered why it had ſo long ſuffered irreligion and licentiouſneſs to be openly taught at the public charge.

Nothing now remained for the poets but to reſiſt or fly. Dryden's conſcience, or his prudence, angry as he was, withheld him from the conflict; Congreve and Vanbrugh attempted anſwers. Congreve, a very young man, elated with ſucceſs, and impatient of cenſure, aſſumed an air of confidence and ſecurity. His chief artifice of controverſy is to retort upon his adverſary his own words: he is very angry, and, hoping to conquer Collier with his own weapons, allows himſelf in the uſe of every term of contumely and contempt; but he has the ſword without the arm of Scanderbeg; he has his antagoniſt's coarſeneſs, but not his ſtrength. Collier replied, for conteſt was his delight; he was not to be frighted from his purpoſe or his prey.

The cauſe of Congreve was not tenable: whatever gloſſes he might uſe for the defence or palliation of ſingle paſſages, the general tenour and tendency of his plays muſt always

be condemned. It is acknowledged, with univerſal conviction, that the peruſal of his works will make no man better; and that their ultimate effect is to repreſent pleaſure in alliance with vice, and to relax thoſe obligations by which life ought to be regulated.

The ſtage found other advocates, and the diſpute was protracted through ten years; but at laſt Comedy grew more modeſt, and Collier lived to ſee the reward of his labour in the reformation of the theatre.

Of the powers by which this important victory was atchieved, a quotation from *Love for Love*, and the remark upon it, may afford a ſpecimen.

Sir Sampſ. *Sampson's a very good name: for your Sampsons were strong dogs from the beginning.*

Angel. *Have a care—If you remember, the strongest Sampson of your name pull'd an old house over his head at last.*

"Here you have the Sacred Hiſtory burleſqued, and Sampſon once more brought into the houſe of Dagon, to make ſport for the Philiſtines!"

Congreve's laſt play was *The Way of the World;* which, though as he hints in his dedication, it was written with great labour and much thought, was received with ſo little favour, that, being in a high degree offended and diſguſted, he reſolved to commit his quiet and his fame no more to the caprices of an audience.

From this time his life ceaſed to be public; he lived for himſelf and his friends; and among his friends was able to name every man of his time whom wit and elegance had raiſed to reputation. It may be therefore reaſonably ſuppoſed that his manners were polite, and his converſation pleaſing.

He ſeems not to have taken much pleaſure in writing, as he contributed nothing to the *Spectator*, and only one paper to the *Tatler*, though publiſhed by men with whom he might be ſuppoſed willing to aſſociate; and though he lived many years after the publication of his Miſcellaneous Poems, yet he added nothing to them, but lived on in literary indolence; engaged in no controverſy, contending with no rival, neither ſoliciting flattery by public commendations, nor provoking enmity by malignant criticiſm, but paſſing his time among the great and ſplendid, in the placid enjoyment of his fame and fortune.

Having owed his fortune to Halifax, he continued always of his patron's party, but, as it ſeems, without violence or acrimony; and his firmneſs was naturally eſteemed, as his abilities were reverenced. His ſecurity therefore was never violated; and when, upon the extruſion of the Whigs, ſome interceſſion was uſed leſt Congreve ſhould be diſplaced, the earl of Oxford made this anſwer:

"Non obtuſa adeo geſtamus pectora Pœni,
Nec tam averſus equos Tyria ſol jungit ab urbe."

He that was thus honoured by the adverſe party, might naturally expect to be advanced when his friends returned to power, and he was accordingly made ſecretary for the iſland of Jamaica; a place, I ſuppoſe, without truſt or care, but which, with his poſt in the cuſtoms, is ſaid to have afforded him twelve hundred pounds a year.

His honours were yet far greater than his profits. Every writer mentioned him with reſpect; and, among other teſtimonies to his merit, Steele made him the patron of his Miſcellany, and Pope inſcribed to him his tranſlation of the Iliad.

But he treated the Muſes with ingratitude; for, having long converſed familiarly with the great, he wiſhed to be conſidered rather as a man of faſhion than of wit; and, when he received a viſit from Voltaire, diſguſted him by the deſpicable foppery of deſiring to be conſidered not as an author but a gentleman; to which the Frenchman replied, "that if he had been only a gentleman, he ſhould not have come to viſit him."

In his retirement he may be ſuppoſed to have applied himſelf to books; for he diſcovers more literature than the poets have commonly attained. But his ſtudies were in his latter days obſtructed by cataracts in his eyes, which at laſt terminated in blindneſs. This melancholy ſtate was aggravated by the gout, for which he ſought relief by a journey to Bath; but being overturned in his chariot, complained from that time of a pain in his ſide, and died, at his houſe in Surrey-ſtreet in the Strand, Jan. 29, 1728.9. Having lain in ſtate in the Jeruſalem-chamber, he was buried in Weſtminſter-abbey, where a monument is erected to his memory by Henrietta ducheſs of Marlborough, to whom, for reaſons either not known or not mentioned, he bequeathed a legacy of about ten thouſand pounds; the accumulation of attentive parſimony, which, though to her ſuperflu-

ous and uſeleſs, might have given great aſſiſtance to the ancient family from which he deſcended, at that time by the imprudence of his relation reduced to difficulties and diſtreſs.

CONGREVE has merit of the higheſt kind; he is an original writer, who borrowed neither the models of his plot, nor the manner of his dialogue. Of his plays I cannot ſpeak diſtinctly; for ſince I inſpected them many years have paſſed; but what remains upon my memory is, that his characters are commonly fictitious and artificial, with very little of nature, and not much of life. He formed a peculiar idea of comic excellence, which he ſuppoſed to conſiſt in gay remarks and unexpected anſwers; but that which he endeavoured, he ſeldom failed of performing. His ſcenes exhibit not much of humour, imagery, or paſſion: his perſonages are a kind of intellectual gladiators; every ſentence is to ward or ſtrike; the conteſt of ſmartneſs is never intermitted; his wit is a meteor playing to and fro with alternate coruſcations. His comedies have therefore, in ſome degree, the operation of tragedies; they ſurpriſe rather than divert, and raiſe admiration oftener than merriment. But they are the works of a mind replete with images, and quick in combination.

Of his miſcellaneous poetry, I cannot ſay any thing very favourable. The powers of Congreve ſeem to deſert him when he leaves the ſtage, as Antæus was no longer ſtrong than he could touch the ground. It cannot be obſerved without wonder, that a mind ſo vigorous and fertile in dramatic compoſitions ſhould on any other occaſion diſcover nothing but impotence and poverty. He has in theſe little pieces neither elevation of fancy, ſelection of language, nor ſkill in verſification: yet, if I were required to ſelect from the whole maſs of Engliſh poetry the moſt poetical paragraph, I know not what I could prefer to an exclamation in *The Mourning Bride*:

> *Alm.* It was a fancy'd noiſe; for all is huſh'd.
> *Leo.* It bore the accent of a human voice.
> *Alm.* It was thy fear, or elſe ſome tranſient wind
> Whiſtling thro' hollows of this vaulted iſle:
> We'll liſten—
> *Leo.* Hark!

Alm. No, all is hush'd and still as death.—'Tis dreadful!
How reverend is the face of this tall pile;
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads
To bear aloft its arch'd and ponderous roof,
By its own weight made stedfast and immovable,
Looking tranquillity! It strikes an awe
And terror on my aching sight; the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And shoot a chilness to my trembling heart.
Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;
Nay, quickly speak to me, and let me hear
Thy voice—my own affrights me with its echoes.

He who reads those lines enjoys for a moment the powers of a poet; he feels what he remembers to have felt before, but he feels it with great increase of sensibility; he recognizes a familiar image, but meets it again amplified and expanded, embellished with beauty, and enlarged with majesty.

Yet could the author, who appears here to have enjoyed the confidence of nature, lament the death of queen Mary in lines like these:

The rocks are cleft, and new-descending rills
Furrow the brows of all th' impending hills.
The water-gods to floods their rivulets turn,
And each, with streaming eyes, supplies his wanting urn.
The Fauns forsake the woods, the Nymphs the grove,
And round the plain in sad distractions rove:
In prickly brakes their tender limbs they tear,
And leave on thorns their locks of golden hair.
With their sharp nails, themselves the Satyre wound,
And tug their shaggy beards, and bite with grief the ground.
Lo, Pan himself, beneath a blasted oak,
Dejected lies, his pipe in pieces broke.
See Pales weeping too, in wild despair,
And to the piercing winds her bosom bare.
And see yon fading myrtle, where appears
The Queen of Love, all bath'd in flowing tears;
See how she wrings her hands, and beats her breast,
And tears her useless girdle from her waist:
Hear the sad murmurs of her sighing doves!
For grief they sigh, forgetful of their loves.

And many years after, he gave no proof that time had improved his wisdom or his wit; for, on the death of the marquis of Blandford, this was his song:

And now the winds, which had ſo long been ſtill,
Began the ſwelling air with ſighs to fill:
The water-nymphs, who motionleſs remain'd,
Like images of ice, while ſhe complain'd,
Now loos'd their ſtreams: as when deſcending rains
Roll the ſteep torrents headlong o'er the plains.
The prone creation, who ſo long had gaz'd,
Charm'd with her cries, and at her griefs amaz'd,
Began to roar and howl with horrid yell,
Diſmal to hear, and terrible to tell;
Nothing but groans and ſighs were heard around,
And Echo multiplied each mournful ſound.

In both theſe funeral poems, when he has *yelled* out many *ſyllables* of ſenſeleſs *dolour*, he diſmiſſes his reader with ſenſeleſs conſolation: from the grave of Paſtora riſes a light that forms a ſtar; and where Amaryllis wept for Amyntas, from every tear ſprung up a violet.

But William is his hero, and of William he will ſing:

The hovering winds on downy wings ſhall wait around,
And catch, and waft to foreign lands, the flying ſound.

It cannot but be proper to ſhew what they ſhall have to catch and carry:

'Twas now, when flowery lawns the proſpect made,
And flowing brooks beneath a foreſt ſhade,
A lowing heifer, loveliеſt of the herd,
Stood feeding by; while two fierce bulls prepar'd
Their armed heads for fight; by fate of war to prove
The victor worthy of the fair-one's love.
Unthought preſage of what met next my view;
For ſoon the ſhady ſcene withdrew.
And now, for woods, and fields, and ſpringing flowers,
Behold a town ariſe, bulwark'd with walls and lofty towers;
Two rival armies all the plain o'erſpread,
Each in battalia rang'd, and ſhining arms array'd;
With eager eyes beholding both from far,
Namur, the prize and miſtreſs of the war.

The *Birth of the Muſe* is a miſerable fiction. One good line it has, which was borrowed from Dryden. The concluding verſes are theſe:

This ſaid, no more remain'd. Th' etherial hoſt
Aagain impatient crowd the cryſtal coaſt.
The father, now, within his ſpacious hands,
Encompaſs'd all the mingled maſs of ſeas and lands;

> And, having heav'd aloft the ponderous ſphere,
> He launch'd the world to float in ambient air.

Of his irregular poems, that to Mrs. Arabella Hunt ſeems to be the beſt: his ode for Cecilia's Day, however, has ſome lines which Pope had in his mind when he wrote his own.

His imitations of Horace are feebly paraphraſtical, and the additions which he makes are of little value. He ſometimes retains what were more poperly omitted, as when he talks of *vervain* and *gums* to propitiate Venus.

Of his Tranſlations, the ſatire of Juvenal was written very early, and may therefore be forgiven, though it have not the maſſineſs and vigour of the original. In all his verſions ſtrength and ſprightlineſs are wanting: his Hymn to Venus, from Homer, is perhaps the beſt. His lines are weakened with expletives, and his rhymes are frequently imperfect.

His petty poems are ſeldom worth the coſt of criticiſm: ſometimes the thoughts are falſe, and ſometimes common. In his verſes on lady Gethin, the latter part is an imitation of Dryden's ode on Mrs. Killingrew; and Doris, that has been ſo laviſhly flattered by Steele, has indeed ſome lively ſtanzas, but the expreſſion might be mended; and the moſt ſtriking part of the character had been already ſhewn in *Love for Love*. His *Art of Pleasing* is founded on a vulgar but perhaps impracticable principle, and the ſtaleneſs of the ſenſe is not concealed by any novelty of illuſtration or elegance of diction.

This tiſſue of poetry, from which he ſeems to have hoped a laſting name, is totally neglected, and known only as it is appended to his plays.

While comedy or while tragedy is regarded, his plays are likely to be read; but, except what relates to the ſtage, I know not that he has ever written a ſtanza that is ſung, or a couplet that is quoted. The general character of his Miſcellanies is, that they ſhew little wit, and little virtue.

Yet to him it muſt be confeſſed that we are indebted for the correction of a national error, and for the cure of our Pindaric madneſs. He firſt taught the Engliſh writers that Pindar's odes were regular; and though certainly he had not the fire requiſite for the higher ſpecies of lyric poetry, he has ſhewn us that enthuſiaſm has its rules, and that in mere confuſion there is neither grace nor greatneſs.

BLACKMORE.

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE is one of thoſe men whoſe writings have attracted much notice, but of whoſe life and manners very little has been communicated, and whoſe lot it has been to be much oftener mentioned by enemies than by friends.

He was the ſon of Robert Blackmore, of Corſham, in Wiltſhire, ſtyled by Wood, *Gentleman*, and ſuppoſed to have been an attorney: having been for ſome time educated in a country-ſchool, he was ſent at thirteen to Weſtminſter; and in 1668 was entered at Edmund-Hall in Oxford, where he took the degree of M. A. June 3, 1676, and reſided thirteen years; a much longer time than is uſual to ſpend at the univerſity; and which he ſeems to have paſſed with very little attention to the buſineſs of the place; for in his poems, the ancient names of nations or places, which he often introduces, are pronounced by chance. He afterwards travelled: at Padua he was doctor of phyſic; and, after having wandered about a year and a half on the Continent, returned home.

In ſome part of his life, it is not known when, his indigence compelled him to teach a ſchool; an humiliation with which, though it certainly laſted but a little while, his enemies did not forget to reproach him, when he became conſpicuous enough to excite malevolence; and let it be remembered for his honour, that to have been once a ſchoolmaſter is the only reproach which all the perſpicacity of malice, animated by wit, has ever fixed upon his private life.

When he firſt engaged in the ſtudy of phyſic, he enquired as he ſays, of Dr. Sydenham what authors he ſhould read, and was directed, by Sydenham, to Don Quixote; *which*, ſaid he, *is a very good book, I read it ſtill.* The perverſeneſs of mankind makes it often miſchievous in men of eminence to give way to merriment. The idle and the illite-

rate will long ſhelter themſelves under this fooliſh apophthegm.

Whether he reſted ſatisfied with this direction, or ſought for better, he commenced phyſician, and obtained high eminence and extenſive practice. He became Fellow of the College of Phyſicians, April 12, 1687, being one of the thirty which, by the new charter of king James, were added to the former Fellows. His reſidence was in Cheapſide, and his friends were chiefly in the city. In the early part of Blackmore's time, a citizen was a term of reproach; and his place of abode was another topic to which his adverſaries had recourſe, in the penury of ſcandal.

Blackmore, therefore, was made a poet not by neceſſity but inclination, and wrote not for a livelihood but for fame; or, if he may tell his own motives, for a nobler purpoſe, to engage poetry in the cauſe of Virtue.

I believe it is peculiar to him, that his firſt public work was an heroic poem. He was not known as a maker of verſes, till he publiſhed (in 1695) *Prince Arthur*, in ten books, written, as he relates, "by ſuch catches and ſtarts, and in ſuch occaſional uncertain hours as his profeſſion afforded, and for the greateſt part in coffee-houſes, or in paſſing up and down the ſtreets." For the latter part of this apology he was accuſed of writing *to the rumbling of his chariot-wheels.* He had read, he ſays, "but little poetry throughout his whole life; and for fifteen years before had not written an hundred verſes, except one copy of Latin verſes in praiſe of a friend's book."

He thinks, and with ſome reaſon, that from ſuch a performance perfection cannot be expected; but he finds another reaſon for the ſeverity of his cenſurers, which he expreſſes in language ſuch as Cheapſide eaſily furniſhed. "I am not free of the Poets company, having never kiſſed the governor's hands: mine is therefore not ſo much as a permiſſion poem, but a downright interloper. Thoſe gentlemen who carry on the poetical trade in a joint ſtock, would certainly do what they could to ſink and ruin an unlicenſed adventurer, notwithſtanding I diſturbed none of their factories, nor imported any goods they had ever dealt in." He had lived in the city till he had learned its note.

That *Prince Arthur* found many readers is certain; for in two years it had three editions; a very uncommon inſtance of favourable reception, at a time when literary curioſity was yet confined to particular claſſes of the nation.

Such ſucceſs naturally raiſed animoſity; and Dennis attacked it by a formal criticiſm, more tedious and diſguſting than the work which he condemns. To this cenſure may be oppoſed the approbation of Locke and the admiration of Molineux, which are found in their printed Letters. Molineux is particularly delighted with the ſong of *Mopas* which is therefore ſubjoined to this narrative.

It is remarked by Pope, that what *raiſes the hero often ſinks the man.* Of Blackmore it may be ſaid, that as the poet ſinks the man riſes; the animadverſions of Dennis, inſolent and contemptuous as they were, raiſed in him no implacable reſentment; he and his critic were afterwards friends; and in one of his latter works he praiſes Dennis as *equal to Boileau in poetry, and ſuperior to him in critical abilities.*

He ſeems to have been more delighted with praiſe than pained by cenſure, and, inſtead of ſlackening, quickened his career. Having in two years produced ten books of *Prince Arthur*, in two years more (1697) he ſent into the world *King Arthur* in twelve. The provocation was now doubled, and the reſentment of wits and critics may be ſuppoſed to have increaſed in proportion. He found, however, advantages more than equivalent to all their outrages; he was this year made one of the phyſicians in ordinary to king William, and advanced by him to the honour of knighthood, with a preſent of a gold chain and a medal.

The malignity of the wits attributed his knighthood to his new poem; but king William was not very ſtudious of poetry, and Blackmore perhaps had other merit; for he ſays, in his Dedication to *Alfred*, that *he had a greater part in the ſucceſſion of the houſe of Hanover than ever he had boaſted.*

What Blackmore could contribute to the Succeſſion, or what he immagined himſelf to have contributed, cannot now be known. That he had been of conſiderable uſe, I doubt not but he believed, for I hold him to be very honeſt; but he might eaſily make a falſe eſtimate of his own importance: thoſe whom their virtue reſtrains from deceiving others, are often diſpoſed by their vanity to deceive themſelves. Whether he promoted the Succeſſion or not, he at leaſt approved it, and adhered invariably to his principles and party through his whole life.

His ardour of poetry ſtill continued; and not long after (1700) he publiſhed a *Paraphrase on the Book of Job*, and other parts of the Scripture. This performance Dryden, who purſued him with great malignity, lived long enough to ridicule in a Prologue.

The wits eaſily confederated againſt him, as Dryden, whoſe favour they almoſt all courted, was his profeſſed adverſary. He had beſides given them reaſon for reſentment, as, in his Preface to *Prince Arthur*, he had ſaid of the Dramatic Writers almoſt all that was alledged afterwards by Collier; but Blackmore's cenſure was cold and general, Collier's was perſonal and ardent; Blackmore taught his reader to diſlike, what Collier incited him to abhor.

In his Preface to *King Arthur* he endeavoured to gain at leaſt one friend, and propitiated Congreve by higher praiſe of his *Mourning Bride* than it has obtained from any other critic.

The ſame year he publiſhed a *Satire on Wit*; a proclamation of defiance which united the poets almoſt all againſt him, and which brought upon him lampoons and ridicule from every ſide. This he doubtleſs foreſaw, and evidently deſpiſed; nor ſhould his dignity of mind be without its praiſe, had he not paid the homage to greatneſs which he denied to genius, and degraded himſelf by conferring that authority over the national taſte, which he takes from the poets, upon men of high rank and wide influence, but of leſs wit, and not greater virtue.

Here is again diſcovered the inhabitant of Cheapſide, whoſe head cannot keep his poetry unmingled with trade. To hinder that intellectual bankruptcy which he affects to fear, he will erect a *Bank for Wit*.

In his poem he juſtly cenſured Dryden's impurities, but praiſed his powers; though in a ſubſequent edition he retained the ſatire and omitted the praiſe. What was his reaſon I know not; Dryden was then no longer in his way.

His head ſtill teemed with heroic poetry, and (1705) he publiſhed *Eliza* in ten books. I am afraid the world was now weary of contending about Blackmore's heroes; for I do not remember that by any author, ſerious or comical, I have found *Eliza* either praiſed or blamed. She *dropped*, it ſeems, *dead-born from the preſs*. It is never mentioned, and was never ſeen by me till I borrowed it for the preſent

occaſion. Jacob ſays, *it is corrected and revised, for another impression*; but the labour of reviſion was thrown away.

From this time he turned ſome of his thoughts to the celebration of living characters; and wrote a poem on the *Kit-cat Club* and *Advice to the Poets how to celebrate the Duke of Marlborough*; but on occaſion of another year of ſucceſs, thinking himſelf qualified to give more inſtruction, he again wrote a poem of *Advice to a Weaver of Tapestry*. Steele was then publiſhing the *Tatler*; and looking round him for ſomething at which he might laugh, unluckily lighted on Sir Richard's work, and treated it with ſuch contempt, that, as Fenton obſerves, he put an end to the ſpecies of writers that gave *Advice to Painters*.

Not long after (1712) he publiſhed *Creation, a philoſophical Poem*, which has been, by my recommendation, inſerted in the late collection. Whoever judges of this by any other of Blackmore's performances, will do it injury. The praiſe given it by Addiſon *(Spec.* 389*)* is too well known to be tranſcribed; but ſome notice is due to the teſtimony of Dennis, who calls it a "phyloſophical Poem, which has equalled that of Lucretius in the beauty of its verſification, and infinitely ſurpaſſed it in the ſolidity and ſtrength of its reaſoning."

Why an author ſurpaſſes himſelf, it is natural to enquire. I have heard from Mr. Draper, an eminent bookſeller, an account received by him from Ambroſe Philips, "That Blackmore, as he proceeded in his poem, laid his manuſcript from time to time before a club of wits with whom he aſſociated; and that every man contributed, as he could, either improvement or correction; ſo that," ſaid Philips, "there are perhaps no where in the book, thirty lines together that now ſtand as they were originally written."

The relation of Philips, I ſuppoſe, was true; but when all reaſonable, all credible allowance is made for this friendly reviſion, the author will ſtill retain an ample dividend of praiſe; for to him muſt always be aſſigned the plan of the work, the diſtribution of its parts, the choice of topics, the train of argument, and what is yet more, the general predominance of philoſophical judgment and poetical ſpirit. Correction ſeldom affects more than the ſuppreſſion of faults: a happy line, or a ſingle elegance, may perhaps be added; but of a large work the general character muſt always remain; the original conſtitution can be very little

helped by local remedies; inherant and radical dulneſs will never be much invigorated by extrinſic animation.

This poem if he had written nothing elſe would have tranſmitted him to poſterity among the firſt favourites of the Engliſh Muſe; but to make verſes was his tranſcendent pleaſure, and as he was not deterred by cenſure, he was not ſatiated with praiſe.

He deviated, however, ſometimes into other tracks of literature, and condeſcended to entertain his readers with plain proſe. When the *Spectator* ſtopped he conſidered the polite world as deſtitute of entertainment; and in concert with Mr. Hughes, who wrote every third paper, publiſhed three times a week the *Lay Monastery*, founded on the ſuppoſition that ſome literary men, whoſe characters are deſcribed had retired to a houſe in the country to enjoy philoſophical leiſure, and reſolved to inſtruct the public, by communicating their diſquiſitions and amuſements. Whether any real perſons were concealed under fictitious names, is not known. The hero of the club is one Mr. Johnſon; ſuch a conſtellation of excellence, that his character ſhall not be ſuppreſſed though their is no great genius in the deſign, nor ſkill in the delineation.

"The firſt I ſhall name is Mr. Johnſon, a gentleman that owes to Nature excellent faculties and an elevated genius, and to induſtry and application many acquired accompliſhments. His taſte is diſtinguiſhing, juſt and delicate; his judgment clear, and his reaſon ſtrong, accompanied with an imagination full of ſpirit, of great compaſs, and ſtored with refined ideas. He is a critic of the firſt rank; and, what is his peculiar ornament, he is delivered from the oſtentation, malevolence, and ſupercilious temper, that ſo often blemiſh men of that character. His remarks reſult from the nature and reaſon of things, and are formed by a judgment free, and unbiaſſed by the authority of thoſe who have lazily followed each other in the ſame beaten track of thinking, and are arrived only at the reputation of acute grammarians and commentators; men, who have been copying one another many hundred years, without any improvement; or, if they have ventured farther, have only applied in a mechanical manner the rules of ancient critics to modern writings, and with great labour diſcovered nothing but their own want of judgment and capacity. As Mr. Johnſon penetrates to the bottom of his ſubject, by which means his obſervations are ſolid and natural, as well

as delicate, so his design is always to bring to light something useful and ornamental; whence his character is the reverse to theirs, who have eminent abilities in insignificant knowledge, and a great felicity in finding out trifles. He is no less industrious to search out the merit of an author, than sagacious in discerning his errors and defects; and takes more pleasure in commending the beauties than exposing the blemishes of a laudable writing: like Horace, in a long work, he can bear some deformities, and justly lay them on the imperfection of human nature, which is incapable of faultless productions. When an excellent *Drama* appears in public, and by its intrinsic worth attracts a general applause, he is not stung with envy and spleen; nor does he express a savage nature, in fastening upon the celebrated author, dwelling upon his immaginary defects, and passing over his conspicuous excellencies. He treats all writers upon the same impartial foot; and is not like the little critics, taken up entirely in finding only the beauties of the ancient, and nothing but the errors of the modern writers. Never did any one express more kindness and good nature to young and unfinished authors; he promotes their interests, protects their reputation, extenuates their faults, and sets off their virtues, and by his candour guards them from the severity of his judgment. He is not like those dry critics, who are morose because they cannot write themselves, but is himself master of a good vein in poetry; and though he does not often employ it, yet he has sometimes entertained his friends with his unpublished performances."

The rest of the *Lay Monks* seem to be but feeble mortals in comparison with the gigantic Johnson; who yet, with all his abilities, and the help of the fraternity, could drive the publication but to forty papers, which were afterwards collected into a volume, and called in the title *A Sequel to the Spectators*.

Some years afterwards (1716 and 1717) he published two volumes of Essays in prose, which can be commended only as they are written for the highest and noblest purpose the promotion of religion. Blackmore's prose is not the prose of a poet; for it is languid, sluggish, and lifeless; his diction is neither daring nor exact, his flow neither rapid nor easy, and his periods neither smooth nor strong. His account of *Wit* will show with how little clearness he is

content to think, and how little his thoughts are recommended by his language.

"As to its efficient cauſe, *Wit* owes its production to an extraordinary and peculiar temperament in the conſtitution of the poſſeſſor of it, in which is found a concurrence of regular and exalted ferments, and an affluence of animal ſpirits, refined and rectified to a great degree of purity; whence, being endowed with vivacity, brightneſs, and celerity, as well in their reflections as direct motions, they become proper inſtruments for the ſpritely operations of the mind; by which means the imagination can with great facility range the wide field of Nature, contemplate an infinite variety of objects, and, by obſerving the ſimilitude and diſagreement of their ſeveral qualities, ſingle out and abſtract, and then ſuit and unite thoſe ideas which will beſt ſerve its purpoſe. Hence beautiful alluſions, ſurpriſing metaphors, and admirable ſentiments, are always ready at hand: and while the fancy is full of images collected from innumerable objects and their different qualities, relations, and habitudes, it can at pleaſure dreſs a common notion in a ſtrange but becoming garb; by which, as before obſerved, the ſame thought will appear a new one, to the great delight and wonder of the hearer. What we call *genius* reſults from this particular happy complexion in the firſt formation of the perſon that enjoys it, and is Nature's gift, but diverſified by various ſpecific characters and limitations as its active fire is blended and allayed by different proportions of phlegm, or reduced and regulated by the contraſt of oppoſite ferments. Therefore, as there happens in the compoſition of a facetious genius a greater or leſs, though ſtill an inferior, degree of judgment and prudence, one man of wit will be varied and diſtinguiſhed from another." In theſe Eſſays he took little care to propitiate the wits; for he ſcorns to avert their malice at the expence of virtue or of truth.

"Several, in their books, have many ſarcaſtical and ſpiteful ſtrokes at religion in general; while others make themſelves pleaſant with the principles of the Chriſtian. Of the laſt kind this age has ſeen a moſt audacious example in the book intituled, *A Tale of a Tub.* Had this writing been publiſhed in a pagan or popiſh nation, who are juſtly impatient of all indignity offered to the eſtabliſhed religion of their country, no doubt but the author would have received the puniſhment he deſerved. But the fate of this impi-

ous buffoon is very different; for in a proteſtant kingdom, zealous of their civil and religious immunities, he has not only eſcaped affronts and the effects of public reſentment, but has been careſſed and patronized by perſons of great figure, and of all denominations. Violent Party-men, who differed in all things beſides, agreed in their turn to ſhew particular reſpect and friendſhip to this inſolent derider of the worſhip of his country, till at laſt the reputed writer is not only gone off with impunity, but triumphs in his dignity and preferment. I do not know that any inquiry or ſearch was ever made after this writing, or that any reward was ever offered for the diſcovery of the author, or that the infamous book was ever condemned to be burnt in public: whether this proceeds from the exceſſive eſteem and love that men in power, during the late reign, had for wit, or their defect of zeal and concern for the Chriſtian Religion, will be determined beſt by thoſe who are beſt acquainted with their character."

In another place he ſpeaks with becoming abhorrence of a *godless author* who has burleſqued a Pſalm. This author was ſuppoſed to be Pope, who publiſhed a reward for any one that would produce the coiner of the accuſation, but never denied it; and was afterwards the perpetual and inceſſant enemy of Blackmore.

One of his Eſſays is upon the Spleen, which is treated by him ſo much to his own ſatisfaction, that he has publiſhed the ſame thoughts in the ſame words; firſt in the *Lay Monastery;* then in the Eſſay; and then in the Preface to a Medical Treatiſe on the Spleen. One paſſage, which I have found already twice, I will here exhibit, becauſe I think it better imagined, and better expreſſed, than could be expected from the common tenour of his proſe:

"—As the ſeveral combinations of ſplenetic madneſs and folly produce an infinite variety of irregular underſtanding, ſo the amicable accommodation and alliance between ſeveral virtues and vices produce an equal diverſity in the diſpoſitions and manners of mankind; whence it comes to paſs, that as many monſtrous and abſurd productions are found in the moral as in the intellectual world, how ſurpriſing is it to obſerve among the leaſt culpable men, ſome whoſe minds are attracted by heaven and earth, with a ſeeming equal force; ſome who are proud of humility; others who are cenſorious and uncharitable, yet ſelf-denying and devout; ſome who join contempt of the world with

fordid avarice; and others, who preſerve a great degree of piety, with ill-nature and ungoverned paſſions: nor are inſtances of this inconſiſtent mixture leſs frequent among bad men, where we often, with admiration, ſee perſons at once generous and unjuſt, impious lovers of their country, and flagitious heroes, good-natured ſharpers, immoral men of honour, and libertines who will ſooner die than change their religion; and though it is true that repugnant coalitions of ſo high a degree are found but in a part of mankind, yet none of the whole maſs, either good or bad, are entirely exempted from ſome abſurd mixture."

He about this time (Aug. 22, 1716) became one of the *Elects* of the College of Phyſicians; and was ſoon after (Oct. 1,) choſen *Cenſor*. He ſeems to have arrived late, whatever was the reaſon, at his medical honours.

Having ſucceeded ſo well in his book on *Creation*, by which he eſtabliſhed the great principle of all Religion, he thought his undertaking imperfect, unleſs he likewiſe enforced the truth of Revelation; and for that purpoſe added another poem on *Redemption*. He had likewiſe written, before his *Creation*, three books on the *Nature of Man*.

The lovers of muſical devotion have always wiſhed for a more happy metrical verſion than they have yet obtained of the book of Pſalms; this wiſh the piety of Blackmore led him to gratify, and he produced (1721) *a new Verſion of the* Pſalms *of* David, *fitted to the Tunes uſed in Churches*; which, being recommended by the archbiſhops and many biſhops, obtained a licence for its admiſſion into public worſhip; but no admiſſion has it yet obtained, nor has it any right to come where Brady and Tate have got poſſeſſion. Blackmore's name muſt be added to thoſe of many others, who, by the ſame attempt, have obtained only the praiſe of meaning well.

He was not yet deterred from heroic poetry; there was another monarch of this iſland, for he did not fetch his heroes from foreign countries, whom he conſidered as worthy of the Epic muſe, and he dignified Alfred (1723) with twelve books. But the opinion of the nation was now ſettled; a hero introduced by Blackmore was not likely to find either reſpect or kindneſs; *Alfred* took his place by *Eliza* in ſilence and darkneſs: benevolence was aſhamed to favour, and malice was weary of inſulting. Of his four Epic Poems, the firſt had ſuch reputation and popularity as enraged the critics; the ſecond was at leaſt known

enough to be ridiculed; the two laſt had neither friends nor enemies.

Contempt is a kind of gangrene, which if it ſeizes one part of a character corrupts all the reſt by degrees. Blackmore, being deſpiſed as a poet, was in time neglected as a phyſician; his practice, which was once invidiouſly great, forſook him in the latter part of his life; but being by nature, or by principle, averſe from idleneſs, he employed his unwelcome leiſure in writing books on phyſic, and teaching others to cure thoſe whom he could himſelf cure no longer. I know not whether I can enumerate all the treatiſes by which he has endeavoured to diffuſe the art of healing; for there is ſcarcely any diſtemper, of dreadful name, which he has not taught his reader how to oppoſe. He has written on the ſmall-pox, with a vehement invective againſt inoculation; on conſumptions, the ſpleen, the gout, the rheumatiſm, the king's evil, the dropſy, the jaundice, the ſtone, the diabetes, and the plague.

Of thoſe books if I had read them, it could not be expected that I ſhould be able to give a critical account. I have been told that there is ſomething in them of vexation and diſcontent, diſcovered by a perpetual attempt to degrade phyſic from its ſublimity, and to repreſent it as attainable without much previlious or concomitant learning. By the tranſient glancies which I have thrown upon them, I have obſerved an affected contempt of the Ancients, and a ſupercilious deriſion of tranſmitted knowledge. Of this indecent arrogance the following quotation from his Preface to the Treatiſe on the Small-pox will afford a ſpecimen; in which, when the reader finds, what I fear is true, that when he was cenſuring Hippocrates he did not know the difference between *aporism* and *apophthegm*, he will not pay much regard to his determinations concerning ancient learning.

"As for this book of Aphoriſms, it is like my lord Bacon's of the ſame title, a book of jeſts, or a grave collection of trite and trifling obſervations; of which though many are true and certain, yet they ſignify nothing, and may afford diverſion, but no inſtruction; moſt of them being much inferior to the ſaying of the wiſe men of Greece, which yet are ſo low and mean, that we are entertained every day with more valuable ſentiments at the table-converſation of ingenious and learned men."

I am unwilling, however, to leave him in total diſgrace, and will therefore quote from another Preface a paſſage leſs reprehenſible.

"Some gentlemen have been diſingenious and unjuſt to me, by wreſting and forcing my meaning in the Preface to another book, as if I condemned and expoſed all learning, though they knew I declared that I greatly honoured and eſteemed all men of ſuperior literature and erudition; and that I only undervalued falſe or ſuperficial learning, that ſignifies nothing for the ſervice of mankind; and that, as to phyſic, I expreſsly affirmed that learning muſt be joined with native genius to make a phyſician of the firſt rank; but if thoſe talents are ſeparated, I aſſerted, and do ſtill inſiſt, that a man of native ſagacity and diligence, will prove a more able and uſeful practiſer, than a heavy notional ſcholar, encumbered with a heap of confuſed ideas."

He was not only a poet and a phyſician, but produced likewiſe a work of a different kind, *A true and impartial History of the Conſpiracy againſt King* William, *of glorious Memory, in the Year* 1695. This I have never ſeen, but ſuppoſe it at leaſt compiled with integrity. He engaged likewiſe in theological controverſy, and wrote two books againſt the Arians; *Juſt Prejudices againſt the* Arian *Hypotheſis;* and *Modern* Arians *unmaſked.* Another of his works is *Natural Theology, or Moral Duties conſidered apart from Poſitive; with ſome Obſervations on the Deſirableneſs and Neceſſity of a ſupernatural Revelation.* This was the laſt book that he publiſhed. He left behind him *The accompliſhed Preacher, or an Eſſay upon Divine Eloquence;* which was printed after his death by Mr. White of Nayland in Eſſex, the miniſter who attended his death-bed, and teſtified the fervent piety of his laſt hours. He died on the eighth of October, 1729.

BLACKMORE, by the unremitted enmity of the wits, whom he provoked more by his virtue than his dulneſs, has been expoſed to worſe treatment than he deſerved; his name was ſo long uſed to point every epigram upon dull writers, that it became at leaſt a bye-word of contempt: but it deſerves obſervation, that malignity takes hold only of his writings, and that his life paſſed without reproach,

even when his boldneſs of reprehenſion naturally turned upon him many eyes deſirous to eſpy faults, which many tongues would have made haſteto publiſh. But thoſe who could not blame, could at leaſt forbear to praiſe, and therefore of his private life and domeſtic character there are no memorials.

As an author he may juſtly claim the honours of magnanimity. The inceſſant attacks of his enemies, whether ſerious or merry, are never diſcovered to have diſturbed his quiet, or to have leſſened his confidence in himſelf; they neither awed him to ſilence nor to caution; they neither provoked him to petulance, nor depreſſed him to complaint. While the diſtributors of literary fame were endeavouring to depreciate and degrade him, he either deſpiſed or defied them, wrote on as he had written before, and never turned aſide to quiet them by civility, or repreſs them by confutation.

He depended with great ſecurity on his own powers, and perhaps was for that reaſon leſs diligent in peruſing books. His literature was, I think, but ſmall. What he knew of antiquity, I ſuſpect him to have gathered from modern compilers: but though he could not boaſt of much critical knowledge, his mind was ſtored with general principles, and he left minute reſearches to thoſe whom he conſidered as little minds.

With this diſpoſition he wrote moſt of his poems. Having formed a magnificent deſign, he was careleſs of particular and ſubordinate elegancies; he ſtudied no niceties of verſification; he waited for no felicities of fancy; but caught his firſt thoughts in the firſt words in which they were preſented: nor does it appear that he ſaw beyond his own performances, or had ever elevated his views to that ideal perfection which every genius born to excel is condemned always to purſue, and never overtake. In the firſt ſuggeſtions of his imagination he acquieſced; he thought them good, and did not ſeek for better. His works may be read a long time without the occurrence of a ſingle line that ſtands prominent from the reſt.

The poem on *Creation* has, however, the appearance of more circumſpection; it wants neither harmony of numbers, accuracy of thought, nor elegance of diction: it has either been written with great care, or, what cannot be imagined of ſo long a work, with ſuch felicity as made care leſs neceſſary.

Its two conſtituent parts are ratiocination and deſcription. To reaſon in verſe, is allowed to be difficult; but Blackmore not only reaſons in verſe, but very often reaſons poetically; and finds the art of uniting ornament with ſtrength, and eaſe with cloſeneſs. This is a ſkill which Pope might have condeſcended to learn from him, when he needed it ſo much in his Moral Eſſays.

In his deſcriptions both of life and nature, the poet and the philoſopher happily co-operate; truth is recommended by elegance, and elegance ſuſtained by truth.

In the ſtructure and order of the poem, not only the greater parts are properly conſecutive, but the didactic and illuſtrative paragraphs are ſo happily mingled, that labour is relieved by pleaſure, and the attention is led on through a long ſucceſſion of varied excellence to the original poſition, the fundamental principle of wiſdom and of virtue.

AS the heroic poems of Blackmore are now little read, it is thought proper to inſert, as a ſpecimen from *Prince Arthur*, the ſong of *Mopas* mentioned by Molineux.

But that which Arthur with moſt pleaſure heard,
Were noble ſtrains, by Mopas ſung the bard,
Who to his harp in lofty verſe began,
And through the ſecret maze of Nature ran.
He the great ſpirit ſung, that all things fill'd,
That the tumultuous waves of Chaos ſtill'd:
Whoſe nod diſpos'd the jarring ſeeds to peace,
And made the wars of hoſtile Atoms ceaſe.
All Beings we in fruitful Nature find,
Proceeded from the great Eternal Mind;
Streams of his unexhauſted ſpring of power,
And cheriſh'd with his influence, endure.
He ſpread the pure cerulean fields on high,
And arch'd the chambers of the vaulted ſky,
Which he, to ſuit their glory with their height,
Adorn'd with globes, that reel, as drunk with light.
His hand directed all the tuneful ſpheres,
He turn'd their orbs, and poliſh'd all the ſtars.
He fill'd the Sun's vaſt lamp with golden light,
And bid the ſilver Moon adorn the night,
He ſpread the airy Ocean without ſhores,
Where birds are wafted with their feather'd oars.

Then ſung the bard how the light vapours riſe
From the warm earth, and cloud the ſmiling ſkies.
He ſung how ſome, chill'd in their airy flight,
Fall ſcatter'd down in pearly dew by night.
How ſome, rais'd higher, ſit in ſecret ſteams
On the reflected points of bounding beams;
Till, chil'd with cold, they ſhade th' etherial plain,
Then on the thirſty earth deſcend in rain.
How ſome, whoſe parts a ſlight contexture ſhow,
Sink hovering through the air, in fleecy ſnow.
How part is ſpun in ſilken threads, and clings
Entangled in the graſs in glewy ſtrings.
How others ſtamp to ſtones, with ruſhing ſound
Fall from their cryſtal quarries to the ground.
How ſome are laid in trains, that kindled fly
In harmleſs fires by night, about the ſky.
How ſome in winds blow with impetuous force,
And carry ruin where they bend their courſe:
While ſome conſpire to form a gentle breeze,
To fan the air, and play among the trees.
How ſome, enrag'd, grow turbulent and loud,
Pent in the bowels of a frowning cloud;
That cracks, as if the axis of the world
Was broke, and heaven's bright towers were downwards hurl'd.
He ſung how earth's wide ball, at Jove's command,
Did in the midſt on airy columes ſtand.
And how the ſoul of plants, in priſon held,
And bound with ſluggiſh fetters, lies conceal'd,
Till with the Spring's warm beams, almoſt releaſt
From the dull weight, with which it lay oppreſt,
Its vigour ſpreads, and makes the teeming earth
Heave up, and labour with the ſprouting birth;
The active ſpirit freedom ſeeks in vain,
It only works and twiſts a ſtranger chain.
Urging its priſon's ſides to break away,
It makes that wider, where 'tis forc'd to ſtay:
Till, having form'd its living houſe, it rears
Its head, and in a tender plant appears.
Hence ſprings the oak, the beauty of the grove,
Whoſe ſtately trunk fierce ſtorms can ſcarcely move.
Hence grows the cedar, hence the ſwelling vine
Does round the elm its purple cluſters twine.
Hence painted flowers the ſmiling gardens bleſs,
Both with their fragrant ſcent and gaudy dreſs.
Hence the white lily in full beauty grows,
Hence the blue violet, and bluſhing roſe.
He ſung how ſun-beams brood upon the earth,
And in the glebe hatch ſuch a numerous birth;
Which way the genial warmth in Summer ſtorms
Turns putrid vapours to a bed of worms;

How rain, transform'd by this prolific power,
Falls from the clouds an animated ſhower.
He ſung the embryo's growth within the womb,
And how the parts their various ſhapes aſſume.
With what rare art the wondrous ſtructure's wrought,
From one crude maſs to ſuch perfection brought;
That no part uſeleſs, none miſplac'd we ſee,
None are forgot, and more would monſtrous be.

FENTON.

THE brevity with which I am to write the account of ELIJAH FENTON is not the effect of indifference or negligence. I have ſought intelligence among his relations in his native county, but have not obtained it.

He was born near Newcaſtle in Staffordſhire, of an ancient family, whoſe eſtate was very conſiderable; but he was the youngeſt of twelve children, and being therefore neceſſarily deſtined to ſome lucrative employment, was ſent firſt to ſchool, and afterwards to Cambridge; but, with many other wiſe and virtuous men, who at that time of diſcord and debate conſulted conſcience, whether well or ill informed, more than intereſt, he doubted the legality of the government, and, refuſing to qualify himſelf for public employment by the oaths required, left the univerſity without a degree; but I never heard that the enthuſiaſm of oppoſition impelled him to ſeparation from the church.

By this perverſeneſs of integrity he was driven out a commoner of Nature, excluded from the regular modes of profit and proſperity, and reduced to pick up a livelihood uncertain and fortuitous; but it muſt be remembered that he kept his name unſullied, and never ſuffered himſelf to be reduced, like too many of the ſame ſect, to mean arts and diſhonourable ſhifts. Whoever mentioned Fenton, mentioned him with honour.

The life that paſſes in penury, muſt neceſſarily paſs in obſcurity. It is impoſſible to trace Fenton from year to year, or to diſcover what means he uſed for his ſupport. He was a while ſecretary to Charles earl of Orrery in Flanders, and tutor to his young ſon, who afterwards mentioned him with great eſteem and tenderneſs. He was at one time aſſiſtant in the ſchool of Mr. Bonwicke in Surrey; and at another kept a ſchool for himſelf at Sevenoaks in Kent, which he brought into reputation; but was perſuaded to leave it (1710) by Mr. St. John, with promiſes of a more honourable employment.

His opinions, as he was a Nonjuror, ſeem not to have been remarkably rigid. He wrote with great zeal and affection the praiſes of queen Anne, and very willingly and liberally extolled the duke of Marlborough, when he was (1707) at the height of his glory.

He expreſſed ſtill more attention to Marlborough and his family by an elegiac Paſtoral on the marquis of Blandford, which could be prompted only by reſpect or kindneſs; for neither the duke nor ducheſs deſired the praiſe, or liked the coſt of patronage.

The elegance of his poetry entitled him to the company of the wits of his time, and the amiableneſs of his manners made him loved wherever he was known. Of his friendſhip to Southern and Pope there are laſting monuments.

He publiſhed in 1707 a collection of poems.

By Pope he was once placed in a ſtation that might have been of great advantage. Craggs, when he was advanced to be ſecretary of ſtate (about 1720), feeling his own want of literature, deſired Pope to procure him an inſtructor, by whoſe help he might ſupply the deficiencies of his education. Pope recommended Fenton, in whom Craggs found all that he was ſeeking. There was now a proſpect of eaſe and plenty: for Fenton had merit, and Craggs had generoſity: but the ſmall-pox ſuddenly put an end to the pleaſing expectation.

When Pope, after the great ſucceſs of his *Iliad*, undertook the *Odyssey*, being, as it ſeems, weary of tranſlating, he determined to engage auxiliaries. Twelve books he took to himſelf, and twelve he diſtributed between Broome and Fenton: the books allotted to Fenton were the firſt, the fourth, the nineteenth, and the twentieth. It is obſervable that he did not take the eleventh, which he had before tranſlated into blank verſe, neither did Pope claim it, but committed it to Broome. How the two aſſociates performed their parts is well known to the readers of poetry, who have never been able to diſtinguiſh their books from thoſe of Pope.

In 1723 was performed his tragedy of *Mariamne*; to which Southern, at whoſe houſe it was written, is ſaid to have contributed ſuch hints as his theatrical experience ſupplied. When it was ſhewn to Cibber it was rejected by him, with the additional inſolence of adviſing Fenton to engage himſelf in ſome employment of honeſt labour, by which he might obtain that ſupport which he could never

hope from his poetry. The play was acted at the other theatre; and the brutal petulance of Cibber was confuted, though perhaps not ashamed, by general applause. Fenton's profits are said to have amounted to near a thousand pounds, with which he discharged a debt contracted by his attendance at court.

Fenton seems to have had some peculiar system of versification. *Mariamne* is written in lines of ten syllables, with few of those redundant terminations which the drama not only admits but requires, as more nearly approaching to real dialogue. The tenor of his verse is so uniform that it cannot be thought casual; and yet upon what principle he so constructed it, is difficult to discover.

The mention of his play brings to my mind a very trifling occurrence. Fenton was one day in the company of Broome his associate, and Ford a clergyman, at that time too well known, whose abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise. They determined all to see the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, which was acted that night; and Fenton, as a dramatic poet, took them to the stage-door; where the door-keeper enquiring who they were, was told that they were three very necessary men, Ford, Broome, and Fenton. The name in the play, which Pope restored to *Brook*, was then *Broome*.

It was perhaps after his play that he undertook to revise the punctuation of Milton's Poems, which, as the author neither wrote the original copy nor corrected the press, was supposed capable of amendment. To this edition he prefixed a short and elegant account of Milton's life, written at once with tenderness and integrity.

He published likewise (1729) a very splendid edition of Waller, with notes often useful, often entertaining, but too much extended by long quotations from Clarendon. Illustrations drawn from a book so easily consulted, should be made by reference rather than transcription.

The latter part of his life was calm and pleasant. The relict of Sir William Trumbal invited him, by Pope's recommendation, to educate her son; whom he first instructed at home, and then attended to Cambridge. The lady afterwards detained him with her as the auditor of her ac-

counts. He often wandered to London, and amuſed himſelf with the converſation of his friends.

He died in 1730, at Eaſthamſtead in Berkſhire, the ſeat of the lady Trunbal; and Pope, who had been always his friend, honoured him with an epitaph, of which he borrowed the two firſt lines from Craſhaw.

Fenton was tall and bulky, inclined to corpulence, which he did not leſſen by much exerciſe; for he was very ſluggiſh and ſedentary, roſe late, and when he had riſen, ſat down to his book or papers. A woman that once waited on him in a lodging, told him, as ſhe ſaid, that he would *lie a-bed, and be fed with a ſpoon.* This, however, was not the worſt that might have been prognoſticated; for Pope ſays, in his Letters, that *he died of indolence;* but his immediate diſtemper was the gout.

Of his morals and his converſation the account is uniform: he was never named but with praiſe and fondneſs, as a man in the higheſt degree amiable and excellent. Such was the character given him by the earl of Orrery, his pupil; ſuch is the teſtimony of Pope*, and ſuch were the ſuffrages of all who could boaſt of his acquaintance.

By a former writer of his Life a ſtory is told, which ought not to be forgotten. He uſed, in the latter part of his time, to pay his relations in the country an yearly viſit. At an entertainment made for the family by his elder brother, he obſerved that one of his ſiſters, who had married unfortunately, was abſent; and found, upon enquiry, that diſtreſs had made her thought unworthy of invitation. As ſhe was at no great diſtance, he refuſed to ſit at the table till ſhe was called, and, when ſhe had taken her place, was careful to ſhew her particular attention.

His collection of poems is now to be conſidered. The ode to the *Sun* is written upon a common plan, without uncommon ſentiments; but its greateſt fault is its length. No poem ſhould be long of which the purpoſe is only to ſtrike the fancy, without enlightening the underſtanding by precept, ratiocination, or narrative. A blaze firſt pleaſes, and then tires the ſight.

Of *Florelio* it is ſufficient to ſay that it is an occaſional paſtoral, which implies ſomething neither natural nor artificial, neither comic nor ſerious.

* *Spence.*

The next ode is irregular, and therefore defective. As the ſentiments are pious, they cannot eaſily be new; for what can be added to topics on which ſucceſſive ages have been employed!

Of the *Paraphraſe on Iſaiah* nothing very favourable can be ſaid. Sublime and ſolemn proſe gains little by a change to blank verſe; and the paraphraſt has deſerted his original, by admitting images not Aſiatic, at leaſt not Judaical:

——Returning Peace,
Dove-eyed, and rob'd in white——

Of his petty poems ſome are very trifling, without any thing to be praiſed either in the thought or expreſſion. He is unlucky in his competitions; he tells the ſame idle tale with Congreve, and does not tell it ſo well. He tranſlates from Ovid the ſame epiſtle as Pope; but I am afraid not with equal happineſs.

To examine his performances one by one would be tedious. His tranſlation from Homer into blank verſe will find few readers while another can be had in rhyme. The piece addreſſed to Lambarde is no diſagreeable ſpecimen of epiſtolary poetry and his ode to the lord Gower was pronounced by Pope the next ode in the Engliſh language to Dryden's Cecilia. Fenton may be juſtly ſtyled an excellent verſifyer and a good poet.

WHATEVER I have ſaid of Fenton is confirmed by Pope in a Letter, by which he communicated to Broome an account of his death.

TO

The Rev. Mr. BROOME

At PULHAM, near HARLESTONE

NOR

SUFFOLKE

By BECCLES Dag.

DEAR SIR,

I INTENDED to write to you on this melancholy ſubject, the death of Mr. Fenton, before yours came; but ſtayed to have informed myſelf and you of the circumſtances of it. All I hear is, that he felt a Gradual Decay, tho ſo early in

Life, and was declining for 5 or 6 months. It was not, as I apprehend, the Gout in his Stomach, but I believe rather a complication firſt of Groſs Humors, as he was naturally corpulent, not diſcharging themſelves, as he uſed no ſort of Exerciſe. No man better bore the approaches of his Diſſolution (as I am told) or with leſs oſtentation yielded up his Being. The great Modeſty which you know was natural to him, and the great Contempt he had for all Sorts of Vanity and Parade, never appeared more than in his laſt moments: He had a conſcious Satisfaction (no doubt) in acting right, in feeling himſelf honeſt, true, and unpretending to more than was his own. So he dyed, as he lived, with that ſecret, yet ſufficient, Contentment.

As to any Papers left behind him, I dare ſay they can be but few; for this reaſon, He never wrote out of Vanity, or thought much of the Applauſe of Men. I know an Inſtance where he did his utmoſt to conceal his own merit that way; and if we join to this his natural Love of Eaſe, I fancy we muſt expect little of this ſort: at leaſt I hear of none except ſome few further remarks on Waller (which his cautious integrity made him leave an order to be given to Mr. Tonſon) and perhaps, tho tis many years ſince I ſaw it, a Tranſlation of the firſt Book of Oppian. He had begun a Tragedy of Dion, but made ſmall progreſs in it.

As to his other Affairs, he dyed poor, but honeſt, leaving no Debts, or Legacies; except of a few pounds to Mr. Trumbull and my Lady, in token of reſpect, Gratefulneſs, and mutual Eſteem.

I ſhall with pleaſure take upon me to draw this amiable, quiet, deſerving, unpretending, Chriſtian and Philoſophical character, in His Epitaph. There Truth may be ſpoken in a few words: as for Flouriſh, and Oratory, and Poetry, I leave them to younger and more lively Writers, ſuch as love writing for writing ſake, and would rather ſhow their own Fine Parts, than Report the valuable ones of any other man. So the Elegy I renounce.

I condole with you from my heart, on the loſs of ſo worthy a man, and a Friend to us both. Now he is gone, I muſt tell you he has done you many a good office, and ſet your character in the faireſt light, to ſome who either miſtook you, or knew you not. I doubt not he has done the ſame for me.

Adieu: Let us love his Memory, and profit by his example. I am very sincerely

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate

and real Servant,

A. POPE.

Aug. 29th, 1730.

GAY.

JOHN GAY, deſcended from an old family that had been long in poſſeſſion of the manour of * Goldworthy in Devonſhire, was born in 1688, at or near Barnſtaple, where he was educated by Mr. Luck, who taught the ſchool of that town with good reputation, and, a little before he retired from it, publiſhed a volume of Latin and Engliſh verſes. Under ſuch a maſter he was likely to form a taſte for poetry. Being born without proſpect of hereditary riches, he was ſent to London in his youth, and placed apprentice with a ſilk-mercer.

How long he continued behind the counter, or with what degree of ſoftneſs and dexterity he received and accommodated the Ladies, as he probably took no delight in telling it, is not known. The report is, that he was ſoon weary of either the reſtraint or ſervility of his occupation, and eaſily perſuaded his maſter to diſcharge him.

The ducheſs of Monmouth, remarkable for inflexible perſeverance in her demand to be treated as a princeſs, in 1712 took Gay into her ſervice, as ſecretary: by quitting a ſhop for ſuch ſervice he might gain leiſure, but he certainly advanced little in the boaſt of independence. Of his leiſure he made ſo good uſe, that he publiſhed next year a poem on *Rural Sports*, and inſcribed it to Mr. Pope, who was then riſing faſt into reputation. Pope was pleaſed with the honour; and when he became acquainted with Gay, found ſuch attractions in his manners and converſation, that he ſeems to have received him into his inmoſt confidence; and a friendſhip was formed between them which laſted to their ſeparation by death, without any known abatement on either part. Gay was the general favourite of the whole aſſociation of wits; but they regarded him as a play-fellow rather than a partner, and treated him with more fondneſs than reſpect.

* Goldworthy *does not appear in the* Villare.

Next year he publiſhed *The Shepherd's Week*, ſix Engliſh Paſtorals, in which the images are drawn from real life, ſuch as it appears among the ruſtics in parts of England remote from London. Steele, in ſome papers of the *Guardian*, had praiſed Ambroſe Philips, as the Paſtoral writer that yielded only to Theocritus, Virgil, and Spenſer. Pope, who had alſo publiſhed Paſtorals, not pleaſed to be overlooked, drew up a compariſon of his own compoſitions with thoſe of Philips, in which he covertly gave himſelf the preference, while he ſeemed to diſown it. Not content with this, he is ſuppoſed to have incited Gay to write the *Shepherd's Week*, to ſhew, that if it be neceſſary to copy nature with minuteneſs, rural life muſt be exhibited ſuch as groſſneſs and ignorance have made it. So far the plan was reaſonable; but the Paſtorals are introduced by a *Proeme*, written with ſuch imitation as they could attain of obſolete language, and by conſequence in a ſtyle that was never ſpoken nor written in any age or in any place.

But the effect of reality and truth became conſpicuous, even when the intention was to ſhew them grovelling and degraded. Theſe Paſtorals became popular, and were read with delight, as juſt repreſentations of rural manners and occupations by thoſe who had no intereſt in the rivalry of the poets, nor knowledge of the critical diſpute.

In 1713 he brought a commedy called *The Wife of Bath* upon the ſtage, but it received no applauſe; he printed it, however; and ſeventeen years after, having altered it, and as he thought, adapted it more to the public taſte, he offered it again to the town; but, though he was flushed with the ſucceſs of the *Beggar's Opera*, had the mortification to ſee it again rejected.

In the laſt year of queen Anne's life, Gay was made ſecretary to the earl of Clarendon, ambaſſador to the court of Hanover. This was a ſtation that naturally gave him hopes of kindneſs from every party; but the Queen's death put an end to her favours, and he had dedicated his *Shepherd's Week* to Bolingbroke, which Swift conſidered as the crime that obſtructed all kindneſs from the houſe of Hanover.

He did not, however, omit to improve the right which his office had given him to the notice of the royal family. On the arrival of the Princeſs of Wales, he wrote a poem, and obtained ſo much favour, that both the prince and princeſs went to ſee his *What d'ye call it*, a kind of mock tragedy, in which the images were comic, and the action

grave; ſo that, as Pope relates, Mr. Cromwell, who could not hear what was ſaid, was at a loſs how to reconcile the laughter of the audience with the ſolemnity of the ſcene.

Of this performance the value certainly is but little; but it was one of the lucky trifles that give pleaſure by novelty, and was ſo much favoured by the audience, that envy appeared againſt it in the form of criticiſm; and Griffin, a player, in conjunction with Mr. Theobald, a man afterwards more remarkable, produced a pamphlet called the *Key to the What d'ye call it;* which, ſays Gay, *calls me a blockhead, and Mr. Pope a knave.*

But fortune has always been inconſtant. Not long afterwards (1717) he endeavoured to entertain the town with *Three Hours after Marriage*; a commedy written, as there is ſufficient reaſon for believing, by the joint aſſiſtance of Pope and Arbuthnot. One purpoſe of it was to bring into contempt Dr. Woodward the Foſſiliſt, a man not really or juſtly contemptible. It had the fate which ſuch outrages deſerve: the ſcene in which Woodward was directly and apparently ridiculed, by the introduction of a mummy and a crocodile, diſguſted the audience, and the performance was driven off the ſtage with general condemnation.

Gay is repreſented as a man eaſily incited to hope, and deeply depreſſed when his hopes were diſappointed. This is not the character of a hero; but it may naturally imply ſomething more generally welcome, a ſoft and civil companion. Whoever is apt to hope good from others is diligent to pleaſe them; but he that believes his powers ſtrong enough to force their own way, commonly tries only to pleaſe himſelf.

He had been ſimple enough to imagine that thoſe who laughed at the *What d'ye call it* would raiſe the fortune of its author; and finding nothing done, ſunk into dejection. His friends endeavoured to divert him. The earl of Burlington ſent him (1716) into Devonſhire; the year after, Mr. Pulteney took him to Aix; and in the following year lord Harcourt invited him to his ſeat, where, during his viſit, the two rural lovers were killed with lightning, as is particularly told in Pope's Letters.

Being now generally known, he publiſhed (1720) his Poems by ſubſcription, with ſuch ſucceſs, that he raiſed a thouſand pounds; and called his friends to a conſultation, what uſe might be beſt made of it. Lewis, the ſteward of lord Oxford, adviſed him to intruſt it to the funds, and live

upon the intereſt; Arbuthnot bade him intruſt it to Providence, and live upon the principal; Pope directed him, and was ſeconded by Swift, to purchaſe an annuity.

Gay in that diſaſtrous year * had a preſent from young Craggs of ſome South-ſea-ſtock, and once ſuppoſed himſelf to be maſter of twenty thouſand pounds. His friends perſuaded him to ſell his ſhare; but he dreamed of dignity and ſplendour, and could not bear to obſtruct his own fortune. He was then importuned to ſell as much as would purchaſe an hundred a year for life, *which*, ſays Fenton, *will make you ſure of a clean ſhirt and a ſhoulder of mutton every day.* This council was rejected; the profit and principal were loſt, and Gay ſunk under the calamity ſo low that his life became in danger.

By the care of his friends, among whom Pope appears to have ſhewn particular tenderneſs, his health was reſtored; and, returning to his ſtudies, he wrote a tragedy called *The Captives*, which he was invited to read before the princeſs of Wales. When the hour came, he ſaw the princeſs and her ladies all in expectation, and advancing with reverence, too great for any other attention, ſtumbled at a ſtool, and falling forwards, threw down a weighty Japan ſcreen. The princeſs ſtarted, the ladies ſcreamed, and poor Gay after all the diſturbance, was ſtill to read his play.

The fate of *The Captives*, which was acted at Drury-Lane in 1723, I know not; but he now thought himſelf in favour, and undertook (1726) to write a volume of Fables for the improvement of the young duke of Cumberland. For this he is ſaid to have been promiſed a reward, which he had doubtleſs magnified with all the wild expectations of indigence and vanity.

Next year the Prince and Princeſs became King and Queen, and Gay was to be great and happy; but upon the ſettlement of the houſehold he found himſelf appointed gentleman-uſher to the princeſs Louiſa. By this offer he thought himſelf inſulted, and ſent a meſſage to the Queen, that he was too old for the place. There ſeem to have been many machinations employed afterwards in his favour, and diligent court was paid to Mrs. Howard, afterwards counteſs of Suffolk, who was much beloved by the King and Queen, to engage her intereſt for his promotion; but

* *Spence.*

ſolicitations, verſes, and flatteries were thrown away; the lady heard them, and did nothing.

All the pain which he ſuffered from the neglect, or, as he perhaps termed it, the ingratitude of the court, may be ſuppoſed to have been driven away by the unexampled ſucceſs of the *Beggar's Opera*. This play, written in ridicule of the muſical Italian Drama, was firſt offered to Cibber and his brethren at Drury-Lane, and rejected; it being then carried to Rich, had the effect, as was ludicrouſly ſaid, of *making* Gay *rich*, and Rich *gay*.

Of this lucky piece, as the reader cannot but wiſh to know the original and progreſs, I have inſerted the relation which Spence has given in Pope's words.

"Dr. Swift had been obſerving once to Mr. Gay, what an odd pretty ſort of a thing a Newgate Paſtoral might make. Gay was inclined to try at ſuch a thing for ſome time; but afterwards thought it would be better to write a comedy on the ſame plan. This was what gave riſe to the *Beggar's Opera*. He began on it; and when firſt he mentioned it to Swift, the Doctor did not much like the project. As he carried it on, he ſhewed what he wrote to both of us, and we now-and-then gave a correction, or a word or two of advice; but it was wholly of his own writing.——When it was done, neither of us thought it would ſucceed.——We ſhewed it to Congreve; who, after reading it over, ſaid, It would either take greatly, or be damned confoundedly.——We were all, at the firſt night of it, in great uncertainty of the event; till we were very much encouraged by overhearing the duke of Argyle, who ſat in the next box to us, ſay, 'It will do——it muſt do! I ſee it in the eyes of them.' This was a good while before the firſt Act was over, and ſo gave us eaſe ſoon; for that duke (beſides his own good taſte) has a particular knack, as any one now living, in diſcovering the taſte of the public. He was quite right in this, as uſual; the good nature of the audience appeared ſtronger and ſtronger every act, and ended in a clamour of applauſe."

Its reception is thus recorded in the notes to the *Dunciad*:

"This piece was received with greater applauſe than was ever known. Beſides being acted in London fifty-three days without interruption, and renewed the next ſeaſon with equal applauſe, it ſpread into all the towns of England; was played in many places to the thirtieth and fortieth time; at Bath and Briſtol fifty, &c. It made its

progrefs into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, where it was performed twenty-four days fucceſſively. The ladies carried about with them the favourite ſongs of it in fans, and houſes were furniſhed with it in ſcreens. The fame of it was not confined to the author only. The perſon who acted Polly, till then obſcure, became all at once the favourite of the town; her pictures were engraved, and ſold in great numbers; her Life written, books of letters and verſes to her publiſhed, and pamphlets made even of her ſayings and jeſts. Furthermore, it drove out of England (for that ſeaſon) the Italian Opera, which had carried all before it for ten years."

Of this performance, when it was printed, the reception was different, according to the different opinion of its readers. Swift commended it for the excellence of its morality, as a piece that *placed all kinds of vice in the ſtrongeſt and moſt odious light;* but others, and among them Dr. Herring, afterwards archbiſhop of Canterbury, cenſured it as giving encouragement not only to vice but to crimes, by making a highwayman the hero, and diſmiſſing him at laſt unpuniſhed. It has been even ſaid, that after the exhibition of the *Beggar's Opera* the gangs of robbers were evidently multiplied.

Both theſe deciſions are ſurely exaggerated. The play, like many others, was plainly written only to divert, without any moral purpoſe, and is therefore not likely to do good; nor can it be conceived, without more ſpeculation than life requires or admits, to be productive of much evil. Highwaymen and houſe-breakers ſeldom frequent the playhouſe, or mingle in any elegant diverſion; nor is it poſſible for any one to imagine that he may rob with ſafety, becauſe he ſees Macheath reprieved upon the ſtage.

This objection however, or ſome other rather political than moral, obtained ſuch prevalence, that when Gay produced a ſecond part under the name of Polly, it was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain; and he was forced to recompenſe his repulſe by a ſubſcription, which is ſaid to have been ſo liberally beſtowed, that what he called oppreſſion ended in profit. The* publication was ſo much favoured, that though the firſt part gained him four hundred pounds, near thrice as much was the profit of the ſecond.

* *Spence.*

He received yet another recompence for this ſuppoſed hardſhip, in the affectionate attention of the duke and ducheſs of Queenſberry, into whoſe houſe he was taken, and with whom he paſſed the remaining part of his life. The* duke, conſidering his want of œconomy, undertook the management of his money, and gave it to him as he wanted it. But it is ſuppoſed that the diſcountenance of the Court ſunk deep into his heart, and gave him more diſcontent than the applauſes or tenderneſs of his friends could overpower. He ſoon fell into his old diſtemper, an habitual colic, and languiſhed, though with many intervals of eaſe and cheerfulneſs, till a violent fit at laſt ſeized him, and hurried him to the grave, as Arbuthnot reported, with more precipitance than he had ever known. He died on the fourth of December 1732, and was buried in Weſtminſter Abbey. The letter which brought an account of his death to Swift was laid by for ſome days unopened, becauſe when he received it he was impreſt with the preconception of ſome misfortune.

After his death was publiſhed a ſecond volume of Fables more political than the former. His opera of *Achilles* was acted, and the profits were given to two widow ſiſters, who inherited what he left, as his lawful heirs; for he died without a will, though he had gathered* three thouſand pounds. There have appeared likewiſe under his name a comedy called the *Diſtreſt Wife*, and the *Rehearſal at Gotham*, a piece of humour.

The character given him by Pope* is this, that *he was a natural man, without deſign, who ſpoke what he thought, and juſt as he thought it;* and that *he was of a timid temper, and fearful of giving offence to the great;* which caution however, ſays Pope, was of no avail.

As a poet he cannot be rated very high. He was, as I once heard a female critic remark, *of a lower order.* He had not in any great degree the *mens divinior*, the dignity of genius. Much however muſt be allowed to the author of a new ſpecies of compoſition, though it be not of the higheſt kind. We owe to Gay the Ballad Opera; a mode of comedy which at firſt was ſuppoſed to delight only by its novelty, but has now by the experience of half a century been found ſo well accommodated to the diſpoſition of a popular audience, that it is likely to keep long poſſeſſion of

* *Spence.*

the ſtage. Whether this new drama was the product of judgment or of luck, the praiſe of it muſt be given to the inventor; and there are many writers read with more reverence, to whom ſuch merit of originality cannot be attributed.

His firſt performance, the *Rural Sports*, is ſuch as was eaſily planned and executed; it is never contemptible, nor ever excellent. The *Fan* is one of thoſe mythological fictions which antiquity delivers ready to the hand; but which, like other things that lie open to every one's uſe, are of little value. The attention naturally retires from a new tale of Venus, Diana, and Minerva.

His Fables ſeem to have been a favourite work; for, having publiſhed one volume, he left another behind him. Of this kind of Fables, the authors do not appear to have formed any diſtinct or ſettled notion. Phædrus evidently confounds them with *Tales*, and Gay both with *Tales* and *Allegorical Prosopopœias*. A *Fable* or *Apologue*, ſuch as is now under conſideration, ſeems to be, in its genuine ſtate, a narrative in which beings irrational, and ſometimes inanimate, *arbores loquuntur*, *non tantum feræ*, are, for the purpoſe of moral inſtruction, feigned to act and ſpeak with human intereſts and paſſions. To this deſcription the compoſitions of Gay do not always conform. For a Fable he gives now and then a Tale or an abſtracted Allegory; and from ſome, by whatever name they may be called, it will be difficult to extract any moral principle. They are, however, told with livelineſs; the verſification is ſmooth, and the diction, though now-and-then a little conſtrained by the meaſure or the rhyme, is generally happy.

To *Trivia* may be allowed all that it claims; it is ſprightly, various, and pleaſant. The ſubject is of that kind which Gay was by nature qualified to adorn; yet ſome of his decorations may be juſtly wiſhed away. An honeſt blackſmith might have done for Patty what is performed by Vulcan. The appearance of Cloacina is naufeous and ſuperfluous; a ſhoeboy could have been produced by the caſual cohabitation of mere mortals. Horace's rule is broken in both caſes; there is no *dignus vindice nodus*, no difficulty that required any ſupernatural interpoſition. A patten may be made by the hammer of a mortal, and a baſtard may be dropped by a human ſtrumpet. On great occaſions, and on ſmall, the mind is repelled by uſeleſs and apparent falſehood.

Of his little Poems the public judgment ſeems to be right; they are neither much eſteemed, nor totally deſpiſed. The ſtory of the Apparition is borrowed from one of the tales of Poggio. Thoſe that pleaſe leaſt are the pieces to which *Gulliver* gave occaſion; for who can much delight in the echo of an unnatural fiction?

Dione is a counterpart to *Amynta*, and *Paſtor Fido*, and other trifles of the ſame kind, eaſily imitated, and unworthy of imitation. What the Italians call comedies from a happy concluſion, Gay calls a tragedy from a mournful event; but the ſtyle of the Italians and of Gay is equally tragical. There is ſomething in the poetical *Arcadia* ſo remote from known reality and ſpeculative poſſibility, that we can never ſupport its repreſentation thro' a long work. A Paſtoral of an hundred lines may be endured; but who will hear of ſheep and goats, and myrtle bowers, and purling rivulets, through five acts? Such ſcenes pleaſe Barbarians in the dawn of literature, and children in the dawn of life; but will be for the moſt part thrown away, as men grow wiſe, and nations grow learned.

GRANVILLE.

OF GEORGE GRANVILLE, or as others write *Greenville*, or *Grenville*, afterwards lord Landſdown of Biddeford in the county of Devon, leſs is known than his name and rank might give reaſon to expect. He was born about 1667, the ſon of Bernard Greenville, who was entruſted by Monk with the moſt private tranſactions of the reſtoration, and the grandſon of Sir Bevil Greenville, who died in the King's cauſe, at the battle of Lanſdowne.

His early education was ſuperintended by Sir William Ellis; and his progreſs was ſuch, that before the age of twelve he was ſent to Cambridge, where he pronounced a copy of his own verſes to the princeſs Mary d'Eſte of Modena, then ducheſs of York, when ſhe viſited the univerſity.

At the acceſſion of king James, being now at eighteen, he again exerted his poetical powers, and addreſſed the new monarch in three ſhort pieces, of which the firſt is profane, and the two others ſuch as a boy might be expected to produce; but he was commended by old Waller, who perhaps was pleaſed to find himſelf imitated, in ſix lines, which, though they began with nonſenſe and end with dulneſs, excited in the young author a rapture of acknowledgment, *in numbers such as* Waller's *self might use.*

It was probably about this time that he wrote the poem to the earl of Peterborough, upon his *accomplishment* of the duke of York's marriage with the princeſs of Modena, whoſe charms appear to have gained a ſtrong prevalence over his imagination, and upon whom nothing ever has been charged but imprudent piety, an intemperate and miſguided zeal for the propagation of popery.

However faithful Granville might have been to the King, or however enamoured of the Queen, he has left no reaſon for ſuppoſing that he approved either the artifices or the violence with which the King's religion was inſinuated or

obtruded. He endeavoured to be true at once to the King and to the Church.

Of this regulated loyalty he has tranſmitted to poſterity a ſufficient proof, in the letter which he wrote to his father about a month before the prince of Orange landed.

" Mar, near Doncaſter, Oct. 6, 1688.

To the honourable Mr. Bernard Granville, at the earl of Bathe's, St. James's.

Sir,

" Your having no proſpect of obtaining a commiſſion for me, can no way alter or cool my deſire at this important juncture to venture my life, in ſome manner or other, for my King and my country.

" I cannot bear living under the reproach of lying obſcure and idle in a country retirement, when every man who has the leaſt ſenſe of honour ſhould be preparing for the field.

" You may remember, Sir, with what reluctance I ſubmitted to your commands upon Monmouth's rebellion, when no importunity could prevail with you to permit me to leave the Academy: I was too young to be hazarded; but, give me leave to ſay, it is glorious at any age to die for one's country, and the ſooner the nobler the ſacrifice.

" I am now older by three years. My uncle Bathe was not ſo old when he was left among the ſlain at the battle of Newbury; nor you yourſelf, Sir, when you made your eſcape from your tutor's, to join your brother at the defence of Scilly.

" The ſame cauſe is now come round about again. The King has been miſled; let thoſe who have miſled him be anſwerable for it. Nobody can deny but he is ſacred in his own perſon, and it is every honeſt man's duty to defend it.

" You are pleaſed to ſay, it is yet doubtful if the Hollanders are raſh enough to make ſuch an attempt; but, be that as it will, I beg leave to inſiſt upon it, that I may be preſented to his majeſty, as one whoſe utmoſt ambition it is to devote his life to his ſervice, and my country's, after the example of all my anceſtors.

" The gentry aſſembled at York, to agree upon the choice of repreſentatives for the county, have prepared an addreſs, to aſſure his majeſty they are ready to ſacrifice their lives and fortunes for him upon this and all other oc-

caſions; but at the ſame time they humbly beſeech him to give them ſuch magiſtrates as may be agreeable to the laws of the land; for, at preſent, there is no authority to which they can legally ſubmit.

"They have been beating up for volunteers at York, and the towns adjacent, to ſupply the regiments at Hull; but nobody will liſt.

"By what I can hear, every body wiſhes well to the King; but they would be glad his miniſters were hanged.

"The winds continue ſo contrary, that no landing can be ſo ſoon as was apprehended; therefore I may hope, with your leave and aſſiſtance, to be in readineſs before any action can begin. I beſeech you, Sir, moſt humbly and moſt earneſtly, to add this one act of indulgence more to ſo many other teſtimonies which I have conſtantly received of your goodneſs; and be pleaſed to believe me always with the utmoſt duty and ſubmiſſion, Sir,

Your moſt dutiful ſon,

and moſt obedient ſervant,

GEO. GRANVILLE."

Through the whole reign of king William he is ſuppoſed to have lived in literary retirement, and indeed had for ſome time few other pleaſures but thoſe of ſtudy in his power. He was as the biographers obſerve, the younger ſon of a younger brother; a denomination by which our anceſtors proverbially expreſſed the loweſt ſtate of penury and dependance. He is ſaid, however, to have preſerved himſelf at this time from diſgrace and difficulties by œconomy, which he forgot or neglected in life more advanced, and in better fortune.

About this time he became enamoured of the counteſs of Newburgh, whom he has celebrated with ſo much ardour by the name of Mira. He wrote verſes to her before he was three-and-twenty, and may be forgiven if he regarded the face more than the mind. Poets are ſometimes in too much haſte to praiſe.

In the time of his retirement it is probable that he compoſed his dramatic pieces, the *She Gallants*, (acted 1696,) which he reviſed, and called *Once a Lover and always a Lover; The Jew of Venice*, altered from Shakſpeare's *Heroic Love*, a tragedy (1698); *Merchant of Venice* (1701);

The British Enchanters (1706), a dramatic poem; and *Peleus and Thetis*, a maſque, written to accompany *The Jew of Venice*.

The comedies, which he has not printed in his own edition of his works, I never ſaw; *Once a Lover and always a Lover*, is ſaid to be in a great degree indecent and groſs. Granville could not admire without bigotry; he copied the wrong as well as the right from his maſters, and may be ſuppoſed to have learned obſcenity from Wycherley, as he learned mythology from Waller.

In his *Jew of Venice*, as Rowe remarks, the character of *Shylock* is made comic, and we are prompted to laughter inſtead of deteſtation.

It is evident that *Heroic Love* was written, and preſented on the ſtage, before the death of Dryden. It is a mythological tragedy, upon the love of Agamemnon and Chryſeis, and therefore eaſily ſunk into neglect, though praiſed in verſe by Dryden, and in proſe by Pope.

It is concluded by the wiſe Ulyſſes with this ſpeech:

> Fate holds the ſtrings, and men like children move
> But as they're led; ſucceſs is from above.

At the acceſſion of queen Anne, having his fortune improved by bequeſts from his father, and his uncle the earl of Bathe, he was choſen into parliament for Fowey. He ſoon after engaged in a joint tranſlation of the *Invectives againſt Philip*, with a deſign, ſurely weak and puerile, of turning the thunder of Demoſthenes upon the head of Lewis.

He afterwards (in 1706) had his eſtate again augmented by an inheritance from his elder brother, Sir Bevil Granville, who, as he returned from the government of Barbadoes, died at ſea. He continued to ſerve in parliament; and in the ninth year of queen Anne was choſen knight of the ſhire for Cornwall.

At the memorable change of the miniſtry (1710), he was made ſecretary at war, in the place of Mr. Robert Walpole.

Next year, when the violence of party made twelve peers in a day, Mr. Granville became *Lord Lansdowne*, *Baron Biddeford*, by a promotion juſtly remarked to be not invidious, becauſe he was the heir of a family in which two peerages, that of the earl of Bathe and lord Granville of Potheridge, had lately become extinct. Being now high in

the Queen's favour, he (1712) was appointed comptroller of the houſehold, and a privy counſellor; and to his other honours was added the dedication of Pope's *Windsor Forest*. He was advanced next year to be treaſurer of the houſehold.

Of theſe favours he ſoon loſt all but his title; for at the acceſſion of king George his place was given to the earl Cholmondeley, and he was perſecuted with the reſt of his party. Having proteſted againſt the bill for attaining Ormond and Bolingbroke, he was, after the inſurrection in Scotland, ſeized Sept. 26, 1715, as a ſuſpected man, and confined in the Tower till Feb. 8, 1717, when he was at laſt releaſed, and reſtored to his ſeat in parliament; where (1719) he made a very ardent and animated ſpeech againſt the repeal of the bill to prevent Occaſional Conformity, which, however, though it was then printed, he has not inſerted into his works.

Some time afterwards (about 1722), being perhaps embarraſſed by his profuſion, he went into foreign countries, with the uſual pretence of recovering his health. In this ſtate of leiſure and retirement, he received the firſt volume of Burnet's Hiſtory, of which he cannot be ſuppoſed to have approved the general tendency, and where he thought himſelf able to detect ſome particular falſehoods. He therefore undertook the vindication of general Monk from ſome calumnies of Dr. Burnet, and ſome miſrepreſentations of Mr. Echard. This was anſwered civilly by Mr. Thomas Burnet and Oldmixon, and more roughly by Dr. Colbatch.

His other hiſtorical performance is a defence of his relation Sir Richard Greenville, whom lord Clarendon has ſhewn in a form very unamiable. So much is urged in this apology, to juſtify many actions that have been repreſented as culpable, and to palliate the reſt, that the reader is reconciled for the greater part; and it is made very probable that Clarendon was by perſonal enmity diſpoſed to think the worſt of Greenville, as Greenville was alſo very willing to think the worſt of Clarendon. Theſe pieces were publiſhed at his return to England.

Being now deſirous to conclude his labours, and enjoy his reputation, he publiſhed (1732) a very beautiful and ſplendid edition of his works, in which he omitted what he diſapproved, and enlarged what ſeemed deficient.

He now went to Court, and was kindly received by queen Caroline; to whom and to the princeſs Anne he

preſented his works, with verſes on the blank leaves, with which he concluded his poetical labours.

He died in Hanover-ſquare, Jan. 30, 1735, having a few days before buried his wife, the lady Anne Villiers, widow to Mr. Thynne, by whom he had four daughters, but no ſon.

Writers commonly derive their reputation from their works; but there are works which owe their reputation to the character of the writer. The public ſometimes has its favourites, whom it rewards for one ſpecies of excellence with the honours due to another. From him whom we reverence for his beneficence we do not willingly withhold the praiſe of genius; a man of exalted merit becomes at once an accompliſhed writer, as a beauty finds no great difficulty in paſſing for a wit.

Granville was a man illuſtrious by his birth, and therefore attracted notice: ſince he is by Pope ſtyled *the polite*, he muſt be ſuppoſed elegant in his manners, and generally loved: he was in times of conteſt and turbulence ſteady to his party, and obtained that eſteem which is always conferred upon firmneſs and conſiſtency. With thoſe advantages, having learned the art of verſifying, he declared himſelf a poet; and his claim to the laurel was allowed.

But by a critic of a later generation who takes up his book without any favourable prejudices, the praiſe already received will be thought ſufficient; for his works do not ſhew him to have had much comprehenſion from nature, or illumination from learning. He ſeems to have had no ambition above the imitation of Waller, of whom he has copied the faults, and very little more. He is for ever amuſing himſelf with the puerilities of mythology; his King is Jupiter, who, if the Queen brings no children, has a barren Juno. The Queen is compounded of Juno, Venus, and Minerva. His poem on the ducheſs of Grafton's law-ſuit, after having rattled a while with Juno and Pallas, Mars and Alcides, Caſſiope, Niobe, and the Propetides, Hercules, Minos, and Rhadamanthus, at laſt concludes it folly with profaneneſs.

His verſes to Mira, which are moſt frequently mentioned, have little in them of either art or nature, of the ſentiments of a lover, or the language of a poet: there may be found, now and then, a happier effort; but they are commonly feeble and unaffecting, or forced and extravagant.

His little pieces are ſeldom either ſpritely or elegant, either keen or weighty. They are trifles written by idleneſs, and publiſhed by vanity. But his Prologues and Epilogues have a juſt claim to praiſe.

The *Progress of Beauty* ſeems one of his moſt elaborate pieces, and is not deficient in ſplendor and gaiety; but the merit of original thought is wanting. Its higheſt praiſe is the ſpirit with which he celebrates king James's conſort, when ſhe was a queen no longer.

The *Eſſay on unnatural Flights in poetry* is not inelegant nor injudicious, and has ſomething of vigour beyond moſt of his other performances: his precepts are juſt, and his cautions proper; they are indeed not new, but in a didactic poem novelty is to be expected only in the ornaments and illuſtrations. His poetical precepts are accompanied with agreeable and inſtructive notes.

The Maſque of *Peleus and Thetis* has here and there a pretty line; but it is not always melodious, and the concluſion is wretched.

In his *Britiſh Enchanters* he has bidden defiance to all cronology, by confounding the inconſiſtent manners of different ages; but the dialogue has often the air of Dryden's rhyming plays; and the ſongs are lively, though not very correct. This is, I think, far the beſt of his works; for if it has many faults, it has likewiſe paſſages which are at leaſt pretty, though they do not riſe to any high degree of excellence.

YALDEN.

THOMAS YALDEN, the ſixth ſon of Mr. John Yalden of Suſſex, was born in the city of Exeter in 1671. Having been educated in the grammar-ſchool belonging to Magdalen College in Oxford, he was in 1690, at the age of nineteen, admitted commoner of Magdalen Hall, under the tuition of *Joſiah Pullen*, a man whoſe name is ſtill remembered in the univerſity. He became next year one of the ſcholars of Magdalen College, where he was diſtinguiſhed by a lucky accident.

It was his turn, one day, to pronounce a declamation; and Dr. Hough, the preſident, happening to attend, thought the compoſition too good to be the ſpeaker's. Some time after, the doctor finding him a little irregularly buſy in the library, ſet him an exerciſe for puniſhment; and, that he might not be deceived by any artifice, locked the door. Yalden, as it happened, had been lately reading on the ſubject given, and produced with little difficulty a compoſition which ſo pleaſed the preſident that he told him his former ſuſpicions, and promiſed to favour him.

Among his contemporaries in the College were Addiſon and Sacheverell, men who were in thoſe times friends, and who both adopted Yalden to their intimacy. Yalden continued, throughout his life, to think as probably he thought at firſt, yet did not loſe the friendſhip of Addiſon.

When Namur was taken by king William, Yalden made an ode. There was never any reign more celebrated by the poets than that of William, who had very little regard for ſong himſelf, but happened to employ miniſters who pleaſed themſelves with the praiſe of patronage.

Of this ode mention is made in an humourous poem of that time, called *The Oxford Laureat*; in which, after many claims had been made and rejected, Yalden is repreſented as demanding the laurel, and as being called to his trial, inſtead of receiving a reward.

His crime was for being a felon in verſe,
And preſenting his theft to the king;
The firſt was a trick not uncommon or ſcarce,
But the laſt was an impudent thing:
Yet what he had ſtol'n was ſo little worth ſtealing,
They forgave him the damage and coſt;
Had he ta'en the whole ode, as he took it piece-mealing,
They had fin'd him but ten pence at moſt.

The poet whom he was charged with robbing was Congreve.

He wrote another poem on the death of the duke of Glouceſter.

In 1710 he became fellow of the college; and next year, entering into orders, was preſented by the ſociety with a living in Warwickſhire, conſiſtent with his fellowſhip, and choſen lecturer of moral philoſophy, a very honourable office.

On the acceſſion of queen Anne he wrote another poem; and is ſaid, by the author of the *Biographia*, to have declared himſelf of the party who had the honourable diſtinction of High-churchmen.

In 1706 he was received into the family of the duke of Beaufort. Next year he became doctor in divinity, and ſoon after reſigned his fellowſhip and lecture; and, as a token of his gratitude, gave the college a picture of their founder.

He was made rector of *Chalton* and *Cleanville*, two adjoining towns and benefices in Hertfordſhire; and had the prebends, or ſinecures, of *Deans*, *Hains*, and *Pendles*, in Devonſhire. He had before been choſen, in 1698, preacher of Bridewell Hoſpital, upon the reſignation of Dr. Atterbury.

From this time he ſeems to have led a quiet and inoffenſive life, till the clamour was raiſed about Atterbury's plot. Every loyal eye was on the watch for abettors or partakers of the horrid conſpiracy; and Dr. Yalden, having ſome acquaintance with the biſhop, and being familiarly converſant with Kelly his ſecretary, fell under ſuſpicion, and was taken into cuſtody.

Upon his examination he was charged with a dangerous correſpondence with Kelly. The correſpondence he acknowledged; but maintained, that it had no treaſonable tendency. His papers were ſeized; but nothing was found that could fix a crime upon him, except two words in his

pocket book, *thorough-paced doctrine*. This expreſſion the imagination of his examiners had impregnated with treaſon, and the doctor was enjoined to explain them. Thus preſſed, he told them that the words had lain unheeded in his pocket-book from the time of queen Anne, and that he was aſhamed to give an account of them; but the truth was, that he had gratified his curioſity one day, by hearing *Daniel Burgess* in the pulpit, and thoſe words was a memorial hint of a remarkable ſentence by which he warned his congregation to *beware of* thorough-paced doctrine, *that doctrine, which coming in at one ear, paces through the head, and goes out at the other.*

Nothing worſe than this appearing in his papers, and no evidence ariſing againſt him, he was ſet at liberty.

It will not be ſuppoſed that a man of this character attained high dignities in the church; but he ſtill retained the friendſhip, and frequented the converſation, of a very numerous and ſplendid ſet of acquaintance. He died July 16, 1736, in the 66th year of his age.

Of his poems, many are of that irregular kind, which, when he formed his poetical character, was ſuppoſed to be Pindaric. Having fixed his attention on Cowley as a model, he has attempted in ſome ſort to rival him, and has written a *Hymn* to *Darkneſs*, evidently as a counterpart to Cowley's *Hymn* to *Light*.

This hymn ſeems to be his beſt performance, and is, for the moſt part imagined with great vigour, and expreſſed with great propriety. I will not tranſcribe it. The ſeven firſt ſtanzas are good; but the third, fourth, and ſeventh are the beſt; the eighth ſeems to involve a contradiction; the tenth is exquiſitely beautiful; the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, are partly mythological, and partly religious, and therefore not ſuitable to each other: he might better have made the whole merely philoſophical.

There are two ſtanzas in the poem where Yalden may be ſuſpected, though hardly convicted, of having conſulted the *Hymnus ad Umbram* of *Howerus*, in the ſixth ſtanza, which anſwers in ſome ſort to theſe lines:

Illa ſuo præeſt nocturnis numine ſacris—
Perque vias errare novis dat ſpectra figuris,
Manetque excitos medios ululare per agros
Sub noctem, et queſtu notos complere penates.

And again, at the concluſion :

Illa ſuo ſcenum ſecludit corpore toto
Haud numerans jugi fugientia ſecula lapſu,
Ergo ubi poſtremum mundi compage ſoluta
Hanc rerum molem ſuprema abſumpſerit hora
Ipſa leves cineres nube amplectetur opaca,
Et priſco imperio rurſus dominabitur UMBRA.

His *Hymn* to *Light* is not equal to the other. He ſeems to think that there is an Eaſt abſolute and poſitive where the Morning riſes.

In the laſt ſtanza, having mentioned the ſudden eruption of new created Light, he ſays,

Awhile th' Almighty wondering ſtood.

He ought to have remembered that Infinite Knowledge can never wonder. All wonder is the effect of novelty upon Ignorance.

Of his other poems it is ſufficient to ſay that they deſerve peruſal, though they are not always exactly poliſhed, though the rhymes are ſometimes very ill ſorted, and though his faults ſeem rather the omiſſions of idleneſs than the negligence of enthuſiaſm.

TICKELL.

THOMAS TICKELL, the ſon of the reverend Richard Tickell, was born in 1686, at Bridekirk, in Cumberland; and in April 1701 became a member of Queen's College in Oxford; in 1708 he was made Maſter of Arts, and two years afterwards was choſen Fellow; for which, as he did not comply with the ſtatutes by taking orders, he obtained a diſpenſation from the Crown. He held his Fellowſhip till 1726, and then vacated it by marrying, in that year, at Dublin.

Tickell was not one of thoſe ſcholars who wear away their lives in cloſets; he entered early into the world, and was long buſy in public affairs; in which he was initiated under the patronage of Addiſon, whoſe notice he is ſaid to have gained by his verſes in praiſe of Roſamond.

To thoſe verſes it would not have been juſt to deny regard; for they contain ſome of the moſt elegant encomiaſtic ſtrains; and, among the innumerable poems of the ſame kind, it will be hard to find one with which they need to fear a compariſon. It may deſerve obſervation, that when Pope wrote long afterwards in praiſe of Addiſon, he has copied, at leaſt has reſembled, Tickell.

Let joy ſalute fair Roſamonda's ſhade,
And wreaths of myrtal crown the lovely maid.
Why now perhaps with Dido's ghoſt ſhe roves,
And hears and tells the ſtory of their loves,
Alike they mourn, alike they bleſs their fate,
Since Love, which made them wretched, made them great.
Not longer that relentleſs doom bemoan,
Which gain'd a Virgil and an Addiſon. TICKELL.

Then future ages with delight ſhall ſee
How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's, looks agree;
Or in fair ſeries laurel'd bards be ſhown,
A Virgil there and here an Addiſon. POPE.

He produced another piece of the ſame kind at the appearance of *Cato*, with equal ſkill, but not equal happpineſs.

When the miniſters of queen Anne were negotiating with France, Tickell publiſhed *The Proſpect of Peace*, a poem, of which the tendency was to reclaim the nation from the pride of conqueſt to the pleaſuresof tranquillity. How far Tickell, whom Swift afterwards mentioned as *Whiggissimus*, had then connected himſelf with any party; I know not; this poem certainly did not flatter the practices, or promote the opinions, of the men by whom he was afterwards befriended.

Mr. Addiſon, however he hated the men then in power, ſuffered his friendſhip to prevail over his public ſpirit, and gave in the *Spectator* ſuch praiſes of Tickell's poem, that when, after having long wiſhed to peruſe it, I laid hold on it at laſt, I thought it unequal to the honours which it had received, and found it a piece to be approved rather than admired. But the hope excited by a work of genius, being general and indefinite, is rarely gratified. It was read at that time with ſo much favour, that ſix editions were ſold.

At the arrival of king George he ſung *The Royal Progress*; which being inſerted in the *Spectator* is well known, and of which it is juſt to ſay, that it is neither high nor low.

The poetical incident of moſt importance in Tickell's life was his publication of the firſt book of the *Iliad*, as tranſlated by himſelf, an apparent oppoſition to Pope's *Homer*, of which the firſt part made its entrance into the world at the ſame time.

Addiſon declared that the rival verſions were both good; but that Tickell's was the beſt that ever was made; and with Addiſon the wits, his adherents and followers, were certain to concur. Pope does not appear to have been much diſmayed; *for*, ſays he, *I have the town, that is the mob, on my ſide.* But he remarks, that *it is common for the ſmaller party to make up in diligence what they want in numbers;* he *appeals to the people as his proper judges: and if they are not inclined to condemn him, he is in little care about the high-flyers at Button's.*

Pope did not long think Addiſon an impartial judge; for he conſidered him as the writer of Tickell's verſion. The reaſons for his ſuſpicion I will literally tranſcribe from Mr. Spence's Collection.

"There had been a coldneſs (ſaid Mr. Pope) between Mr. Addiſon and me for ſome time; and we had not been in company together, for a good while, any where but at Button's coffee-houſe, where I uſed to ſee him almoſt every day. On his meeting me there, one day in particular, he took me aſide, and ſaid he ſhould be glad to dine with me, at ſuch a tavern, if I ſtaid till thoſe people were gone (Budgel and Philips). We went accordingly; and after dinner Mr. Addiſon ſaid, 'That he had wanted for ſome time to talk with me; that his friend Tickell had formerly whilſt at Oxford, tranſlated the firſt book of the *Iliad*; that he deſigned to print it, and had deſired him to look it over; that he muſt therefore beg that I would not deſire him to look over my firſt book, becauſe, if he did, it would have the air of double-dealing,' I aſſured him that I did not at all take it ill of Mr. Tickell that he was going to publiſh his tranſlation: that he certainly had as much right to tranſlate any author as myſelf; and that publiſhing both was entering on a fair ſtage. I then added, that I would not deſire him to look over my firſt book of the *Iliad*, becauſe he had looked over Mr. Tickell's; but could wiſh to have the benefit of his obſervations on my ſecond, which I had then finiſhed, and which Mr. Tickell had not touched upon. Accordingly I ſent him the ſecond book the next morning; and Mr. Addiſon a few days after returned it, with very high commendations.—Soon after it was generally known that Mr. Tickell was publiſhing the firſt book of the *Iliad*, I met Dr. Young in the ſtreet; and, upon our falling into that ſubject, the Doctor expreſſed a great deal of ſurpriſe at Tickell's having had ſuch a tranſlation ſo long by him. He ſaid that it was inconceivable to him, and that there muſt be ſome miſtake in the matter; that each uſed to communicate to the other whatever verſes they wrote, even to the leaſt things; that Tickell could not have been buſied in ſo long a work there without his knowing ſomething of the matter; and that he had never heard a ſingle word of it till on this occaſion. This ſurpriſe of Dr. Young, together with what Steele has ſaid againſt Tickell in relation to this affair, make it highly probable that there was ſome underhand dealing in that buſineſs; and indeed Tickell himſelf, who is a very fair worthy man, has ſince, in a manner, as good as owned it to me. [When it was introduced into a converſation between Mr. Tickell and Mr. Pope by a third perſon, Tickell did not deny it; which,

conſidering his honour and his zeal for his departed friend, was the ſame as owning it.]"

Upon theſe ſuſpicions, with which Dr. Warburton hints that other circumſtances concurred, Pope always in his *Art of Sinking* quotes this book as the work of Addiſon.

To compare the two tranſlations would be tedious; the palm is now given univerſally to Pope; but I think the firſt lines of Tickell's were rather to be preferred, and Pope ſeems to have ſince borrowed ſomething from them in the correction of his own.

When the Hanover ſucceſſion was diſputed, Tickell gave what aſſiſtance his pen would ſupply. His *Letter to Avignon* ſtands high among party-poems; it expreſſes contempt without coarſeneſs, and ſuperiority without inſolence.—It had the ſucceſs which it deſerved, being five times printed.

He was now intimately united to Mr. Addiſon, who, when he went into Ireland as ſecretary to the lord Sunderland, took him thither, and employed him in public buſineſs; and when (1717) afterwards he roſe to be ſecretary of ſtate, made him under-ſecretary. Their friendſhip ſeems to have continued without abatement; for when Addiſon died, he left him the charge of publiſhing his works with a ſolemn recommendation to the patronage of Craggs.

To theſe works he prefixed an elegy on the author, which could owe none of its beauties to the aſſiſtance which might be ſuſpected to have ſtrengthened or embelliſhed his earlier compoſitions; but neither he nor Addiſon ever produced nobler lines than are contained in the third and fourth paragraphs, nor is a more ſublime or more elegant funeral poem to be found in the whole compaſs of Engliſh literature.

He was afterwards (about 1725) made ſecretary to the Lord juſtices of Ireland, a place of great honour; in which he continued till 1740, when he died on the twenty-third of April at Bath.

Of the poems yet unmentioned the longeſt is *Kenſington Gardens*, of which the verſification is ſmooth and elegant, but the fiction unſkilfully compounded of Grecian Deities and Gothic Fairies. Neither ſpecies of thoſe exploded Beings could have done much, and when they are brought together, they only make each other contemptible. To Tickell, however, cannot be refuſed a high place among

the minor poets ; nor ſhould it be forgotten that he was one of the contributors to the *Spectator*. With reſpect to his perſonal character, he is ſaid to have been a man of gay converſation, at leaſt a temperate lover of wine and company, and in his domeſtic relations without cenſure.

HAMMOND.

OF Mr. HAMMOND, though he be well remembered as a man eſteemed and carreſſed by the elegant and great, I was at firſt able to obtain no other memorials than ſuch as are ſupplied by a book called *Cibber's Lives of the Poets*; of which I take this opportunity to teſtify that it was not written, nor, I believe ever ſeen, by either of the Cibbers; but was the work of Robert Shiels, a native of Scotland, a man of very accute underſtanding, though with little ſcholaſtic education, who, not long after the publication of his work, died in London of a conſumption. His life was virtuous, and his end was pious. Theophilus Cibber, then a priſoner for debt, imparted, as I was told, his name for ten guineas. The manuſcript of Shiels is now in my poſſeſſion.

I have ſince found that Mr. Shiels, though he was no negligent enquirer, has been miſled by falſe accounts; for he relates that James Hammond, the author of the following Elegies, was the ſon of a Turky merchant, and had ſome office at the prince of Wales's court, till love of a lady whoſe name was Daſhwood, for a time diſordered his underſtanding. He was unextinguiſhably amorous, and his miſtreſs inexorably cruel.

Of this narrative, part is true, and part falſe. He was the ſecond ſon of Anthony Hammond, a man of note among the wits, poets, and parliamentary orators in the beginning of this century, who was allied to Sir Robert Walpole by marrying his ſiſter. He was born about 1710, and educated at Weſtminſter-ſchool; but it does not appear that he was of any univerſity.

He was equerry to the prince of Wales, and ſeems to have come very early into public notice, and to have been diſtinguiſhed by thoſe whoſe friendſhip prejudiced mankind at that time in favour of the man on whom they were beſtowed; for he was the companion of Cobham, Lyttleton,

and Chesterfield. He is said to have divided his life between pleasure and books; in his retirement forgetting the town, and in his gaity loosing the student. Of his literary hours all the effects are here exhibited, of which the elegies were written very early, and the Prologue not long before his death.

In 1741, he was chosen into parliament for Truro in Cornwall, probably one of those who were elected by the Prince's influence; and died next year in June, at Stowe, the famous seat of the lord Cobham. His mistress long outlived him, and in 1779 died unmarried. The character which her lover bequeathed her, was indeed, not likely to attract courtship.

The elegies are published after his death; and while the writer's name was remembered with fondness, they were read with a resolution to admire them. The recommendatory preface of the editor, who was then believed, and is now affirmed by Dr. Maty, to be the earl of Chesterfield, raised strong prejudices in their favour.

But of the prefacer, whoever he was, it may be reasonably suspected that he never read the poems; for he professes to value them for a very high species of excellence, and recommends them as the genuine effusions of the mind, which expresses a real passion in the language of nature. But the truth is, these elegies have neither passion, nature, nor manners. Where there is fiction, there is no passion; he that describes himself as a shepherd, and his Neæra or Delia as a shepherdess, and talks of goats and lambs, feels no passion. He that courts his mistress with Roman imagery deserves to lose her; for she may with good reason suspect his sincerity. Hammond has few sentiments drawn from nature, and few images from modern life. He produces nothing but frigid pedantry. It would be hard to find in all his productions three stanzas that deserve to be remembered.

Like other lovers, he threatens the lady with dying; and what then shall follow?

Wilt thou in tears thy lover's corse attend;
With eyes averted light the solemn pyre,
Till all around the doleful flames ascend,
Then, slowly sinking, by degrees expire?
To sooth the hovering soul be thine the care,
With plaintive cries to lead the mournful band.

In ſable weeds the golden vaſe to bear,
And cull my aſhes with thy trembling hand:
Panchaia's odours be their coſtly feaſt,
And all the pride of Aſia's fragrant year,
Give them the treaſures of the fartheſt Eaſt,
And, what is ſtill more precious, give thy tear.

Surely no blame can fall upon the nymph who rejected a ſwain of ſo little meaning.

His verſes are not rugged, but they have no ſweetneſs; they never glide in a ſtream of melody. Why Hammond or other writers have thought the quatrain of ten ſyllables elegiac, it is difficult to tell. The character of the Elegy is gentleneſs and tenuity, but this ſtanza has been pronounced by Dryden, whoſe knowledge of Engliſh metre was not inconſiderable, to be the moſt magnificent of all the meaſures which our language affords.

SOMERVILE.

OF Mr. SOMERVILE's Life I am not able to ſay any thing that can ſatisfy curioſity.

He was a gentleman whoſe eſtate was in Warwickſhire; his houſe, where he was born in 1692, is called Edſton, a ſeat inherited for a long line of anceſtors; for he was ſaid to be of the firſt family in his county. He tells of himſelf, that he was born near the Avon's banks. He was bred at Wincheſter-ſchool, and was elected fellow of New College. It does not appear that in the places of his education, he exhibited any uncommon proofs of genius or literature. His powers were firſt diſplayed in the country, where he was diſtinguiſhed as a poet, a gentleman, and a ſkilful and uſeful juſtice of the Peace.

Of the cloſe of his life, thoſe whom his poems have delighted will read with pain the following account, copied from the Letters of his friend Shenſtone, by whom he was too much reſembled.

"—Our old friend Somervile is dead! I did not imagine I could have been ſo ſorry as I find myſelf on this occaſion. ——*Sublatum quærimus.* I can now excuſe all foibles; impute them to age, and to diſtreſs of circumſtances: The laſt of theſe conſiderations wrings my very ſoul to think on. For a man of high ſpirit, conſcious of having (at leaſt in one production) generally pleaſed the world, to be plagued and threatened by wretches that are low in every ſenſe; to be forced to drink himſelf into pains of the body, in order to get rid of the pains of the mind, is a miſery."—He died July 19, 1742, and was buried at Wotton, near Henley, on Arden.

His diſtreſſes need not be much pitied: his eſtate is ſaid to be fifteen hundred a year, which by his death has devolved to lord Somervile, of Scotland. His mother indeed, who lived till ninety, had a jointure of ſix hundred.

It is with regret that I find myſelf not better enabled to exhibit memorials of a writer, who at leaſt muſt be allowed

to have fet a good example to men of his own claſs, by devoting part of his time to elegant knowledge; and who has ſhewn, by the ſubjects which his poetry has adorned, that it is practicable to be at once a ſkilful ſportſman and a man of letters.

Somervile has tried many modes of poetry; and though perhaps he has not in any reached ſuch excellence as to raiſe much envy, it may commonly be ſaid at leaſt, that *he writes very well for a gentleman*. His ſerious pieces are ſometimes elevated, and his trifles are ſometimes elegent. In his verſes to Addiſon, the couplet which mentions *Clio* is written with the moſt exquiſite delicacy of praiſe; it exhibits one of thoſe happy ſtrokes that are ſeldom attained. In his Odes to Marlborough there are beautiful lines; but in the ſecond Ode he ſhews that he knew little of his hero, when he talks of his private virtues. His ſubjects are commonly ſuch as require no great depth of thought or energy of expreſſion. His Fables are generally ſtale, and therefore excite no curioſity. Of his favourite, *The Two Springs*, the fiction is unnatural, and the moral inconſequential. In his Tales there is too much coarſeneſs, with too little care of language, and not ſufficient rapidity of narration.

His great work is his *Chace*, which he undertook in his maturer age, when his ear was improved to the approbation of blank verſe, of which, however, his two firſt lines give a bad ſpecimen. To this poem praiſe cannot be totally denied. He is allowed by ſportſmen to write with great intelligence of his ſubject, which is the firſt requiſite to excellence; and though it is impoſſible to intereſt the common readers of verſe in the dangers or pleaſures of the chace, he has done all that tranſition and variety could eaſily effect; and has, with great propriety, enlarged his plan by the modes of hunting uſed in our countries.

With ſtill leſs judgment did he chuſe blank verſe as the vehicle of *Rural Sports*. If blank verſe be not tumid and gorgeous, it is crippled proſe; and familiar images in laboured language have nothing to recommend them but abſurd novelty, which, wanting the attractions of Nature, cannot pleaſe long. One excellence of the *Splendid Shilling* is, that it is ſhort. Diſguiſe can gratify no longer than it deceives.

SAVAGE.

IT has been obſerved in all ages, that the advantages of nature or of fortune have contributed very little to the promotion of happineſs; and that thoſe whom the ſplendour of their rank, or the extent of their capacity, have placed upon the ſummits of human life, have not often given any juſt occaſion to envy in thoſe who look up to them from a lower ſtation: whether it be that apparent ſuperiority incites great deſigns, and great deſigns are naturally liable to fatal miſcarriages; or that the general lot of mankind is miſery, and the misfortunes of thoſe whoſe eminence drew upon them an univerſal attention, have been more carefully recorded, becauſe they were more generally obſerved, and have in reality been only more conſpicuous than thoſe of others, not more frequent, or more ſevere.

That affluence and power, advantages extrinſic and adventitious, and therefore eaſily ſeparable from thoſe by whom they are poſſeſſed, ſhould very often flatter the mind with expectations of felicity which they cannot give, raiſes no aſtoniſhment; but it ſeems rational to hope, that intellectual greatneſs ſhould produce better effects: that minds qualified for great attainments ſhould firſt endeavour their own benefit; and that they who are moſt able to teach others the way to happineſs, ſhould with moſt certainty follow it themſelves.

But this expectation, however plauſible, has been very frequently diſappointed. The heroes of literary as well as civil hiſtory have been very often no leſs remarkable for what they have atchieved; and volumes have been written only to enumerate the miſeries of the learned, and relate their unhappy lives, and untimely deaths.

To theſe mournful narratives, I am about to add the Life of Richard Savage, a man whoſe writings entitle him to an eminent rank in the claſſes of learning, and whoſe misfortunes claim a degree of compaſſion, not always due

to the unhappy, as they were often the conſequences of the crimes of others, rather than his own.

In the year 1697, Anne Counteſs of Macclesfield, having lived for ſome time upon very uneaſy terms with her huſband, thought a public confeſſion of adultery the moſt obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty; and therefore declared, that the child, with which ſhe was then great, was begotten by the Earl Rivers. This, as may be imagined, made her huſband no leſs deſirous of a ſeparation than herſelf, and he proſecuted his deſign in the moſt effectual manner; for he applied not to the eccleſiaſtical courts for a divorce, but to the parliament for an act, by which his marriage might be diſſolved, the nuptial contract totally annulled, and the children of his wife illegitimated. This act, after the uſual deliberation, he obtained, though without the approbation of ſome, who conſidered marriage as an affair only cognizable by eccleſiaſtical judges *; and on March 3d was ſeparated from his wife, whoſe fortune, which was very great, was repaid her, and who having, as well as her huſband, the liberty of making another choice, was in a ſhort time married to Colonel Brett.

While the Earl of Macclesfield was proſecuting this affair, his wife was, on the 10th of January 1697-8, delivered of a ſon, and the Earl Rivers, by appearing to conſider him as his own, left none any reaſon to doubt of the ſincerity of her declaration; for he was his godfather, and gave him his own name, which was by his direction inſerted in the regiſter of St. Andrew's pariſh in Holborn, but unfortunately left him to the care of his mother, whom, as ſhe was now ſet free from her huſband, he probably imagined likely to treat with great tenderneſs the child that had contributed to ſo pleaſing an event. It is not indeed eaſy to diſcover what motives could be found to over-balance that

* *This year was made remarkable by the diſſolution of a marriage ſolemnized in the face of the church.* SALMON'S REVIEW.

The following proteſt is regiſtered in the books of the Houſe of Lords.

Diſſentient.

Becauſe we conceive that this is the firſt bill of that nature that hath paſſed, where there was not a divorce firſt obtained in the Spiritual Court; which we look upon as an ill precedent, and may be of dangerous conſequence in the future.

HALIFAX.
ROCHESTER.

natural affection of a parent, or what intereſt could be promoted by neglect or cruelty. The dread of ſhame or of poverty, by which ſome wretches have been incited to abandon or to murder their children, cannot be ſuppoſed to have affected a woman who had proclaimed her crimes and ſolicited reproach, and on whom the clemency of the legiſlature had undeſervedly beſtowed a fortune, which would have been very little diminiſhed by the expences which the care of her child could have brought upon her. It was therefore not likely that ſhe would be wicked without temptation, that ſhe would look upon her ſon from his birth with a kind of reſentment and abhorrence; and, inſtead of ſupporting, aſſiſting, and defending him, delight to ſee him ſtruggling with miſery, or that ſhe would take every opportunity of aggravating his misfortunes, and obſtructing his reſources, and with an implacable and reſtleſs cruelty continue her perſecution from the firſt hour of his life to the laſt.

But whatever were her motives, no ſooner was her ſon born, than ſhe diſcovered a reſolution of diſowning him; and in a very ſhort time removed him from her ſight, by committing him to the care of a poor woman, whom ſhe directed to educate him as her own, and enjoined never to inform him of his true parents.

Such was the beginning of the life of Richard Savage. Born with a legal claim to honour and to affluence, he was in two months illegitimated by the parliament, and diſowned by his mother, doomed to poverty and obſcurity, and launched upon the ocean of life, only that he might be ſwallowed by its quickſands, or daſhed upon its rocks.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the ſame cruelty. As it was impoſſible to avoid the inquiries which the curioſity or tenderneſs of her relations made after her child, ſhe was obliged to give ſome account of the meaſures that ſhe had taken; and her mother, the Lady Maſon, whether in approbation of her deſign, or to prevent more criminal contrivances, engaged to tranſact with the nurſe, to pay her for her care, and to ſuperintend the education of the child.

In this charitable office ſhe was aſſiſted by his godmother Mrs. Lloyd, who, while ſhe lived, always looked upon him with that tenderneſs, which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly neceſſary; but her death, which happened in his tenth year, was another of the misfortunes of his

childhood; for though ſhe kindly endeavoured to elleviate his loſs by a legacy of three hudred pounds; yet as he had none to proſecute his claim, to ſhelter him from oppreſſion, or call in law to the aſſiſtance of juſtice, her will was eluded by the executors, and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was however, not yet wholly abandoned. The Lady Maſon ſtill continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a ſmall grammar-ſchool near St. Alban's, where the was called by the name of his nurſe, without the leaſt intimaion that he had a claim to any other.

Here he was initiated in literature, and paſſed through ſeveral of the claſſes, with what rapidity or what applauſe cannot now be known. As he always ſpoke with reſpect of his maſter, it is probable that the mean rank, in which he then appeared, did not hinder his genius from being diſtinguiſhed, or his induſtry from being warded; and if in ſo low a ſtate he obtaind diſtinction and rewards, it is not likely that they were gained but by genius and induſtry.

It is very reaſonable to conjecture, that his application was equal to his abilities, becauſe his improvement was more than proportioned to the opportunities which he enjoyed; nor can it be doubted, that his earlieſt productions had been preſerved, like thoſe of happier ſtudents, we might in ſome have found vigorous ſallies of that ſprightly humour which diſtinguiſhes *The Author to be let*, and in others ſtrong touches of that ardent imagination which painted the ſolemn ſcenes of *The Wanderer*.

While he was thus cultivating his genius, his father the Earl Rivers was ſeized with a diſtemper, which in a ſhort time put an end to his life. He had frequently inquired after his ſon, and had always been amuſed with fallacious and evaſive anſwers; but being now in his own opinion on his death-bed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a poſitive account of him, with an importunity not to be diverted or denied. His mother, who could no longer refuſe an anſwer, determined at leaſt to give ſuch as ſhould cut him off for ever from that happineſs which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was dead; which is perhaps the firſt inſtance of a lie invented by a mother to deprive her ſon of a proviſion which was deſigned him by a nother, and which ſhe could not expect herſelf, though he ſhould looſe it.

This was therefore an act of wickedneſs which could not be defeated, becauſe it could not be ſuſpected. The Earl did not imagine there could exiſt in a human form a mother that would ruin her ſon without enriching herſelf, and therefore beſtowed upon ſome other perſon ſix thouſand pounds, which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

The ſame cruelty which incited his mother to intercept this proviſion which had been intended him, prompted her in a ſhort time to another project, a project worthy of ſuch a diſpoſition. She endeavoured to rid herſelf from the danger of being at any time made known to him, by ſending him ſecretly to the American plantations *.

By whoſe kindneſs this ſcheme was counteracted, or by what interpoſition ſhe was induced to lay aſide her deſign, I know not; it is not improbable that the Lady Maſon might perſuade or compel her to deſiſt, or perhaps ſhe could not eaſily find accomplices wicked enough to concur in ſo cruel an action; for it may be conceived, that thoſe who had by a long gradation of guilt hardened their hearts againſt the ſenſe of common wickedneſs, would yet be ſhocked at the deſign of a mother to expoſe her ſon to ſlavery and want, to expoſe him without intereſt, and without provocation; and Savage might on this occaſion find protectors and advocates among thoſe who had long traded in crimes, and whom compaſſion had never touched before.

Being hindered, by whatever means, from baniſhing him into another country, ſhe formed ſoon after a ſcheme for burying him in poverty and obſcurity in his own; and, that his ſtation of life, if not the place of his reſidence, might keep him for ever at a diſtance from her, ſhe ordered him to be placed with a ſhoemaker in Holborn, that, after the uſual time of trial, he might become his apprentice *.

It is generally reported, that this project was for ſome time ſucceſsful, and that Savage was employed at the awl longer than he was willing to confeſs: nor was it perhaps any great advantage to him, that an unexpected diſcovery determined him to quit his occupation.

About this time his nurſe, who had always treated him as her own ſon, died; and it was natural for him to take care of thoſe effects, which by her death were, as he imagined, become his own; he therefore went to her houſe, opened her boxes, and examined her papers, among which he

* *Preface to Savage's Miſcellanies.*

found ſome letters written to her by the Lady Maſon, which informed him of his birth, and the reaſons for which it was concealed.

He was no longer ſatisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to ſhare the affluence of his mother; and therefore without ſcruple applied to her as her ſon, and made uſe of every art to awaken her tenderneſs, and attract her regard. But neither his letters, nor the interpoſition of thoſe friends which his merit or his diſtreſs procured him, made any impreſſion upon her mind. She ſtill reſolved to neglect, though ſhe could no longer diſown him.

It was to no purpoſe that he frequently ſolicited her to admit him to ſee her; ſhe avoided him with the moſt vigilant precaution, and ordered him to be excluded from her houſe, by whomſoever he might be introduced, and what reaſon ſoever he might have for entering it.

Savage was at the ſame time ſo touched with the diſcovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings * for ſeveral hours before her door, in hopes of ſeeing her as ſhe might come by accident to the window, or croſs her apartment with a candle in her hand.

But all his aſſiduity and tenderneſs were without effect, for he could neither ſoften her heart, nor open her hand, and was reduced to the utmoſt miſeries of want, while he was endeavouring to awaken the affections of a mother: He was therefore obliged to ſeek ſome other means of ſupport; and, having no profeſſion, became by neceſſity an author.

At this time the attention of all the literary world was engroſſed by the Bangorian controverſy, which filled the preſs with pamphlets, and the coffee-houſes with diſputants. Of this ſubject, as moſt popular, he made choice for his firſt attempt, and, without any other knowledge of the queſtion than he had caſually collected from converſation, publiſhed a poem againſt the Biſhop.

What was the ſucceſs or merit of this performance, I know not; it was probably loſt among the innumerable pamphlets to which that diſpute gave occaſion. Mr. Savage was himſelf in a little time aſhamed of it, and endea-

* *See the Plain Dealer.*

voured to ſuppreſs it, by deſtroying all the copies that he could collect.

He then attempted a more gainful kind of writing *, and in his eighteenth year offered to the ſtage a comedy borrowed from a Spaniſh plot, which was refuſed by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more intereſt, made ſome ſlight alterations, and brought it upon the ſtage, under the title of † WOMAN'S A RIDDLE, but allowed the unhappy author no part of the profit.

Not diſcouraged however at his repulſe, he wrote two years afterwards, LOVE IN A VEIL, another comedy, borrowed likewiſe from the Spaniſh, but with little better ſucceſs than before; for though it was received and acted, yet it appeared ſo late in the year, that the author obtained no other advantage from it, than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Wilkes, by whom he was pitied, careſſed, and relieved.

Sir Richard Steele, having declared in his favour with all the ardour of benevolence which conſtituted his character, promoted his intereſt with the utmoſt zeal, related his misfortunes, applauded his merit, took all the opportunities of recommending him, and aſſerted, that ‡ "the inhumanity of his mother had given him a right to find every good man his father."

Nor was Mr. Savage admitted to his acquaintance only, but to his confidence, of which he ſometimes related an inſtance too extraordinary to be omitted, as it affords a very juſt idea of his patron's character.

He was once deſired by Sir Richard, with an air of the utmoſt importance, to come very early to his houſe the next morning. Mr. Savage came as he had promiſed, found the chariot at the door, and Sir Richard waiting for him, and ready to go out. What was intended, and whither they were to go, Savage could not conjecture, and was not willing to enquire; but immediately ſeated himſelf with Sir Richard; the coachman was ordered to drive and they hurried with the utmoſt expedition to Hyde-park corner, where they ſtopped at a petty tavern, and retired to

* *Jacob's Lives of Dramatic Poets.*

† *This play was printed firſt in* 8vo; *and afterwards in* 12mo, *the fifth edition.*

‡ *See the Plain Dealer.*

a private room. Sir Richard then informed him, that he intended to publiſh a pamphlet, and that he had deſired him to come thither that he might write for him. They ſoon ſat down to the work. Sir Richard dictated, and Savage wrote, till the dinner that had been ordered was put upon the table. Savage was ſurpriſed at the meanneſs of the entertainment, and after ſome heſitation ventured to aſk for wine, which Sir Richard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finiſhed their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon.

Mr. Savage then imagined his taſk over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning, and return home; but his expectations deceived him, for Sir Richard told him, that he was without money, and that the pamphlet muſt be ſold before the dinner could be paid for; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to ſale for two guineas, which with ſome difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and compoſed the pamphlet only to diſcharge his reckoning.

Mr. Savage related another fact equally uncommon, which, though it has no relation to his life, ought to be preſerved. Sir Richard Steele having one day invited to his houſe a great number of perſons of the firſt quality, they were ſurpriſed at the number of liveries which ſurrounded the table; and after dinner, when wine and mirth had ſet them free from the obſervation of rigid ceremony, one of them enquired of Sir Richard, how ſuch an expenſive train of domeſtics could be conſiſtent with his fortune. Sir Richard very frankly confeſſed, that they were fellows of whom he would very willingly be rid. And being then aſked why he did not diſcharge them, declared that they were bailiffs who had introduced themſelves with an execution, and whom, ſince he could not ſend them away, he had thought it convenient to embelliſh with liveries, that they might do him credit while they ſtaid.

His friends were diverted with the expedient, and, by paying the debt, diſcharged their attendance, having obliged Sir Richard to promiſe that they ſhould never again find him graced with a retinue of the ſame kind.

Under ſuch a tutor, Mr. Savage was not likely to learn prudence or frugality; and perhaps many of the misfortunes, which the want of thoſe virtues brought upon him

in the following parts of his life, might be juſtly imputed to ſo unimproving an example.

Nor did the kindneſs of Sir Richard end in common favours. He propoſed to have eſtabliſhed him in ſome ſettled ſcheme of life, and to have contracted a kind of alliance with him, by marrying him to a natural daughter, on whom he intended to beſtow a thouſand pounds. But though he was always laviſh of future bounties, he conducted his affairs in ſuch a manner, that he was very ſeldom able to keep his promiſes, or execute his own intentions; and as he was never able to raiſe the ſum which he had offered, the marriage was delayed. In the mean time he was officiouſly informed, that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was ſo much exaſperated, that he withdrew the allowance which he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his houſe.

It is not indeed unlikely that Savage might, by his imprudence, expoſe himſelf to the malice of a tale-bearer; for his patron had many follies, which, as his diſcernment eaſily diſcovered, his imagination might ſometimes incite him to mention too ludicrouſly. A little knowledge of the world is ſufficient to diſcover that ſuch weakneſs is very common, and that there are few who do not ſometimes, in the wantonneſs of thoughtleſs mirth, or the heat of tranſient reſentment, ſpeak of their friends and benefactors with levity and contempt, though in their cooler moments they want neither ſenſe of their kindneſs, nor reverence for their virtue. The fault, therefore, of Mr. Savage was rather negligence than ingratitude; but Sir Richard muſt likewiſe be acquitted of ſeverity, for who is there that can patiently bear contempt from one whom he has relieved and ſupported, whoſe eſtabliſhment he has laboured, and whoſe intereſt he has promoted?

He was again abandoned to fortune, without any other friend than Mr. Wilkes; a man who, whatever were his abilities or ſkill as an actor, deſerves at leaſt to be remembered for his virtues *, which are not often to be found in

* *As it is a loſs to mankind when any good action is forgotten, I ſhall inſert another inſtance of Mr. Wilkes's generoſity, very little known. Mr. Smith, a gentleman educated at Dublin, being hindered by an impediment in his pronunciation from engaging in orders, for which his friends deſigned him, left his own country, and came to London in queſt of employment, but found his ſolicitations fruitleſs, and his neceſſities every day more preſſing. In this diſtreſs he wrote a tragedy, and offered it*

the world, and perhaps leſs often in his profeſſion than in others. To be humane, generous, and candid, is a very high degree of merit in any caſe; but thoſe qualities deſerve ſtill greater praiſe, when they are found in that condition, which makes almoſt every other man, for whatever reaſon, contemptuous, inſolent, petulant, ſelfiſh, and brutal.

As Mr. Wilkes was one of thoſe to whom calamity ſeldom complained without relief, he naturally took an unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only aſſiſted him in any caſual diſtreſſes, but continued an equal and ſteady kindneſs to the time of his death.

By his itnerpoſition Mr. Savage once obtained from his mother * fifty pounds, and a promiſe of one hundred and fifty more; but it was the fate of this unhappy man, that few promiſes of any advantage to him were performed. His mother was infected among others with the general madneſs of the South Sea traffic; and, having been diſappointed in her expectations, refuſed to pay what perhaps nothing but the proſpect of ſudden affluence prompted her to promiſe.

Being thus obliged to depend upon the friendſhip of Mr. Wilkes, he was conſequently an aſſiduous frequenter of the theatres; and in a ſhort time the amuſements of the ſtage took ſuch poſſeſſion of his mind, that he never was abſent from a play in ſeveral years.

This conſtant attendance naturally procured him the acquaintance of the players, and, among others, of Mrs. Oldfield, who was ſo much pleaſed with his converſation, and touched with his misfortunes, that ſhe allowed him a ſettled penſion of fifty pounds a year, which was during her life regularly paid.

to the players, by whom it was rejected. Thus were his laſt hopes defeated, and he had no other proſpect than of the moſt deplorable poverty. But Mr. Wilkes thought his performance, though not perfect, at leaſt worthy of ſome reward, and therefore offered him a benifit. This favour he improved with ſo much diligence, that the houſe afforded him a conſiderable ſum, with which he went to Leyden, applied himſelf to the ſtudy of phyſic; and proſecuted his deſign with ſo much diligence and ſucceſs, that, when Dr. Boerhaave was deſired by the Czarina to recommend proper perſons to introduce into Ruſſia the practice and ſtudy of phyſic, Dr. Smith was one of thoſe whom he ſelected. He had a conſiderable penſion ſettled on him at his arrival, and was one of the chief phyſicians at the Ruſſian court.

* *This I write upon the credit of the author of his life, which was publiſhed* 1727.

That this act of generosity may receive its due praise, and that the good actions of Mrs. Oldfield may not be sullied by her general character, it is proper to mention what Mr. Savage often declared in the strongest terms, that he never saw her alone, or in any other place than behind the scenes.

At her death he endeavoured to shew his gratitude in the most decent manner, by wearing mourning as for a mother; but did not celebrate her in elegies, because he knew that too great profusion of praise would only have revived those faults which his natural equity did not allow him to think less, because they were committed by one who favoured him; but of which, though his virtue would not endeavour to palliate them, his gratitude would not suffer him to prolong the memory, or diffuse the censure.

In his *Wanderer*, he has indeed taken an opportunity of mentioning her, but celebrates her not for her virtue, but her beauty, an excellence which none ever denied her: this is the only encomium with which he has rewarded her liberality, and perhaps he has even in this been too lavish of his praise. He seems to have thought, that never to mention his benefactress would have an appearance of ingratitude, though to have dedicated any particular performance to her memory would have only betrayed an officious partiality, that, without exalting her character, would have depressed his own.

He had sometimes, by the kindness of Mr. Wilkes, the advantage of a benefit, on which occasions he often received uncommon marks of regard and compassion; and was once told by the Duke of Dorset, that it was just to consider him as an injured nobleman, and that in his opinion the nobility ought to think themselves obliged, without solicitation, to take every opportunity of supporting him by their countenance and patronage. But he had generally the mortification to hear that the whole interest of his mother was employed to frustrate his applications, and that she never left any expedient untried, by which he might be cut off from the possibility of supporting life. The same disposition she endeavoured to diffuse among all those over whom nature or fortune gave her any influence, and indeed succeeded too well in her design; but could not always propagate her effrontry with her cruelty, for some of those, whom she incited against him, were ashamed of their own conduct, and boasted of that relief which they never gave him.

In this cenſure I do not indiſcriminately involve all his relations; for he has mentioned with gratitude the humanity of one Lady, whoſe name I am now unable to recollect, and to whom therefore I cannot pay the praiſes which ſhe deſerves for having acted well in oppoſition to influence, precept, and example.

The puniſhment which our laws inflict upon thoſe parents who murder their infants is well known, nor has its juſtice ever been conteſted; but if they deſerve death who deſtroy a child in its birth, what pains can be ſevere enough for her who forbears to deſtroy him only to inflict ſharper miſeries upon him; who prolongs his life only to make him miſerable; and who expoſes him, without care and without pity, to the malice of oppreſſion, the caprices of chance, and the temptations of poverty; who rejoices to ſee him overwhelmed with calamities; and, when his own induſtry, or the charity of others, has enabled him to riſe for a ſhort time above his miſeries, plunges him again into his former diſtreſs?

The kindneſs of his friends not affording him any conſtant ſupply, and the proſpect of improving his fortune by enlarging his acquaintance neceſſarily leading him to places of expence, he found it neceſſary to * endeavour once more at dramatic poetry, for which he was now better qualified by a more extenſive knowledge, and longer obſervation. But having been unſucceſsful in comedy, though rather for want of opportunities than genius, he reſolved now to try whether he ſhould not be more fortunate in exhibiting tragedy.

The ſtory which he choſe for the ſubject was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a ſtory well adapted to the ſtage, though perhaps not far enough removed from the preſent age, to admit properly the fictions neceſſary to complete the plan: for the mind, which naturally loves truth, is always moſt offended with the violation of thoſe truths of which we are moſt certain; and we of courſe conceive thoſe facts moſt certain, which approach neareſt to our own time.

Out of this ſtory he formed a tragedy, which, if the circumſtances in which he wrote it be conſidered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of ſtrength of genius, and evenneſs of mind, of a ſerenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be ſuppreſſed.

* *In* 1724.

During a conſiderable part of the time in which he was employed upon this performance, he was without lodging, and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniencies for ſtudy than the fields or the ſtreet allowed him; there he uſed to walk and form his ſpeeches, and afterwards ſtep into a ſhop, beg for a few moments the uſe of the pen and ink, and write down what he had compoſed, upon paper which he had picked up by accident.

If the performance of a writer thus diſtreſſed is not perfect, its faults ought ſurely to be imputed to a cauſe very different from want of genius, and muſt rather excite pity than provoke cenſure.

But when under theſe diſcouragements the tragedy was finiſhed, there yet remained the labour of introducing it on the ſtage, an undertaking, which, to an ingenious mind, was in a very high degree vexatious and diſguſting; for having little intereſt or reputation, he was obliged to ſubmit himſelf wholly to the players, and admit, with whatever reluctance, the emendations of Mr. Cibber, which he always conſidered as the diſgrace of his performance.

He had indeed in Mr. Hill another critic of a very different claſs, from whoſe friendſhip he received great aſſiſtance on many occaſions, and whom he never mentioned but with the utmoſt tenderneſs and regard. He had been for ſome time diſtinguiſhed by him with very particular kindneſs, and on this occaſion it was natural to apply to him as an author of an eſtabliſhed character. He therefore ſent this tragedy to him, with a ſhort copy of * verſes, in which he deſired his correction. Mr. Hill, whoſe humanity and politeneſs are generally known, readily complied with his requeſt; but as he is remarkable for ſingularity of ſentiment, and bold experiments in language, Mr. Savage did not think his play much improved by his innovation, and had even at that time the courage to reject ſeveral paſſages which he could not approve; and, what is ſtill more laudable, Mr. Hill had the generoſity not to reſent the neglect of his alterations, but wrote the prologue and epilogue, in which he touches on the circumſtances of the author with great tenderneſs.

After all theſe obſtructions and compliances, he was only able to bring his play upon the ſtage in the ſummer, when the chief actors had retired, and the reſt were in poſ-

* *Printed in the late collection of his poems.*

ſeſſion of the houſe for their own advantage. Among theſe, Mr. Savage was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury, by which he gained no great reputation, the theatre being a province for which nature ſeemed not to have deſigned him; for neither his voice, look, nor geſture, were ſuch as were expected on the ſtage; and he was ſo much aſhamed of having been reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the liſt, when a copy of his tragedy was to be ſhown to his friends.

In the publication of his performance he was more ſucceſsful, for the rays of genius that glimmered in it, that glimmered through all the miſts which poverty and Cibber had been able to ſpread over it, procured him the notice and eſteem of many perſons eminent for their rank, their virtue, and their wit.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicated, the accumulated profits aroſe to an hundred pounds, which he thought at that time a very large ſum, having been never maſter of ſo much before.

In the Dedication *, for which he received ten guineas, there is nothing remarkable. The Preface contains a very liberal encomium on the blooming excellences of Mr. Theophilus Cibber, which Mr. Savage could not in the latter part of his life ſee his friends about to read without ſnatching the play out of their hands. The generoſity of Mr. Hill did not end on this occaſion; for afterwards, when Mr. Savage's neceſſities returned, he encouraged a ſubſcription to a Miſcellany of Poems in a very extraordinary manner, by publiſhing his ſtory in the *Plain Dealer* †, with ſome affecting lines, which he aſſerts to have been written by Mr. Savage upon the treatment received by him from his mother, but of which he was himſelf the author as Mr. Savage afterwards declared. Theſe lines, and the paper in which they were inſerted, had a very powerful effect upon all but his mother, whom, by making her cruelty more public, they only hardened in her averſion.

* *To Herbert Tryſt, Eſq; of Herefordſhire.*

† *The* Plain Dealer *was a periodical paper, written by Mr. Hill and Mr. Bond, whom Mr. Savage called the two contending powers of light and darkneſs. They wrote by turns each ſix Eſſays; and the character of the work was obſerved regularly to riſe in Mr. Hill's weeks, and fall in Mr. Bond's.*

Mr. Hill not only promoted the ſubſcription to the Miſcellany, but furniſhed likewiſe the greateſt part of the poems of which it is compoſed, and particularly *The Happy Man*, which he publiſhed as a ſpecimen.

The ſubſcriptions of thoſe whom theſe papers ſhould influence to patronize merit in diſtreſs, without any other ſolicitation, were directed to be left at Button's coffee-houſe; and Mr. Savage going there a few days afterwards, without expectation of any effect from his propoſal, found to his ſurpriſe ſeventy guineas *, which had been ſent him in conſequence of the compaſſion excited by Mr. Hill's pathetic repreſentation.

To this miſcellany he wrote a Preface, in which he gives an account of his mother's cruelty in a very uncommon ſtrain of humour, and with a gaity of imagination, which the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription probably produced.

The Dedication is addreſſed to the Lady Mary Wortley Montague, whom he flatters without reſerve, and to confeſs the truth, with very little † art. The ſame obſervation may be extended to all his Dedications; his compliments are conſtrained and violent, heaped together without the grace of order, or the decency of introduction: he ſeems to have written his panegyrics for the peruſal only of his patrons, and to have imagined that he had no other taſk than

* *The names of thoſe who ſo generouſly contributed to his relief, having been mentioned in a former account, ought not to be omitted here. They were the Ducheſs of Cleveland, Lady Cheyney, Lady Caſtlemain, Lady Gower, Lady Lechmere, the Ducheſs Dowager and Ducheſs of Rutland, Lady Strafford, the Counteſs Dowager of Warwick, Mrs. Mary Floyer, Mrs. Sofuel Noel, Duke of Rutland, Lord Gainſborough, Lord Milſington, Mr. John Savage.*

† *This the following extract from it will prove.*

—"*Since our country has been honoured with the glory of your wit, as elevated and immortal as your ſoul, it no longer remains a doubt whether your ſex have ſtrength of mind in proportion to their ſweetneſs. There is ſomething in your verſes as diſtinguiſhed as your air.—They are as ſtrong as truth, as deep as reaſon, as clear as innocence, and as ſmooth as beauty.—They contain a nameleſs and peculiar mixture of force and grace, which is at once ſo movingly ſerene, and ſo majeſtically lovely, that it is too amiable to appear any where but in your eyes and in your writings.*

"*As fortune is not more my enemy than I am the enemy of flattery, I know not how I can forbear this application to your Ladyſhip, becauſe there is ſcarce a poſſibility that I ſhould ſay more than I believe, when I am ſpeaking of your Excellence.*"

to pamper them with praiſes however groſs, and that flattery would make its way to the heart, without the aſſiſtance of elegance or invention.

Soon afterwards, the death of the king furniſhed a general ſubject for a poetical conteſt, in which Mr. Savage engaged, and is allowed to have carried the prize of honour from his competitors; but I know not whether he gained by his performance any other advantage than the increaſe of his reputation; though it muſt certainly have been with farther views that he prevailed upon himſelf to attempt a ſpecies of writing, of which all the topics had been long before exhauſted, and which was made at once difficult by the multitudes that had failed in it, and thoſe that had ſucceeded.

He was now advancing in reputation, and though frequently involved in very diſtreſsful perplexities, appeared however to be gaining upon mankind, when both his fame and his life were endangered by an event, of which it is not yet determined, whether it ought to be mentioned as a crime or a calamity.

On the 20th of November 1727, Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he then lodged, that he might purſue his ſtudies with leſs interruption, with an intent to diſcharge another lodging which he had in Weſtminſter; and accidentally meeting two gentlemen, his acquaintances, whoſe names were Merchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring coffee-houſe, and ſat drinking till it was late, it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any part of his character to be the firſt of the company that deſired to ſeparate. He would willingly have gone to bed in the ſame houſe; but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the ſtreets, and divert themſelves with ſuch amuſements as ſhould offer themſelves till morning.

In this walk they happened unluckily to diſcover a light in Robinſon's coffee-houſe, near Charing-croſs, and therefore went in. Merchant, with ſome rudeneſs, demanded a room, and was told that there was a good fire in the next parlour, which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Merchant, not ſatisfied with this anſwer, ruſhed into the room, and was followed by his companions. He then petulantly placed himſelf between the company and the fire, and ſoon after kicked down the table. This produced a quarrel, ſwords were drawn on

both ſides, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage, having wounded likewiſe a maid that held him, forced his way with Merchant out of the houſe; but being intimidated and confuſed, without reſolution either to fly or ſtay, they were taken in backcourt by one of the company and ſome ſoldiers, whom he had called to his aſſiſtance.

Being ſecured and guarded that night they were in the morning carried before three juſtices, who committed them to the Gatehouſe, from whence, upon the death of Mr. Sinclair, which happened the ſame day, they were removed in the night to Newgate, where they were however treated with ſome diſtinction, exempted from the ignominy of chains, and confined, not among the common criminals, but in the Peſs-yard.

When the day trial came, the court was crowded in a very unuſual manner, and the public appeared to intereſt itſelf as in a cauſe of general concern. The witneſſes againſt Mr. Savage and his friends were, the woman who kept the houſe, which was a houſe of ill fame, and her maid, the men who were in the room with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the town, who had been drinking with them, and with whom one of them had been ſeen in bed. They ſwore in general, that Merchant gave the provocation, which Savage and Gregory drew their ſwords to juſtify; that Savage drew firſt, and that he ſtabbed Sinclair when he was not in a poſture of defence, or while Gregory commanded his ſword; that after he had given the thruſt he turned pale, and would have retired, but that the maid clung round him, and one of the company endeavoured to detain him, from whom he broke, by cutting the maid on the head, but was afterwards taken in a court.

There was ſome difference in their depoſitions; one did not ſee Savage give the wound, another ſaw it given when Sinclair held his point towards the ground; and the woman of the town aſſerted, that ſhe did not ſee Sinclair's ſword at all: this difference however was very far from amounting to inconſiſtency; but it was ſufficient to ſhew, that the hurry of the diſpute was ſuch, that it was not eaſy to diſcover the truth with relation to particular circumſtances, and that therefore ſome deductions were to be made from the credibility of the teſtimonies.

Sinclair had declared ſeveral times before his death, that he received his wound from Savage, nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it,

by urging the ſuddenneſs of the whole action, and the impoſſibility of any ill deſign, or premeditated malice, and partly to juſtify it by the neceſſity of ſelf-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had loſt that opportunity of giving the thruſt: he obſerved, that neither reaſon nor law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatned, and which, if he ſhould ſuffer it, he might never be able to return; that it was always allowable to prevent an aſſault, and to preſerve life by taking away that of the adverſary, by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured to eſcape, he declared, that it was not his deſign to fly from juſtice, or decline a trial, but to avoid the expences and ſeverities of a priſon; and that he intended to have appeared at the bar without compulſion.

This defence, which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court with the moſt attentive and reſpectful ſilence: thoſe who thought he ought not to be acquitted, owned that applauſe could not be refuſed him; and thoſe who before pitied his misfortunes, now reverenced his abilties.

The witneſſes which appeared againſt him were proved to be perſons of characters which did not entitle them to much credit; a common ſtrumpet, a women by whom ſtrumpets were entertained, and a man by whom they were ſupported; and the character of Savage was by ſeveral perſons of diſtinction aſſerted to be that of a modeſt inoffenſive man, not inclined to broils, or to inſolence, and who had, to that time, been only known for his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges, he had undoubtedly been acquitted; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with his uſual inſolence and ſeverity, and when he had ſummed up the evidence, endeavoured to exaſperate the jury, as Mr. Savage uſed to relate it, with this eloquent harangue:

"Gentlemen of the jury, you are to conſider that Mr Savage is a very great man, a much greater man than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he wears very fine clothes, much finer clothes than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he has abundance of money in his pocket, much more money than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; but gentlemen of the jury, is it not a very hard caſe, gentlemen of the jury, that Mr. Savage ſhould therefore kill you or me, gentlemen of the jury?"

Mr. Savage, hearing his defence thus misrepresented, and the men who were to decide his fate incited against him by invidious comparisons, resolutely asserted, that his cause was not candidly explained, and began to recapitulate what he had before said with regard to his condition, and the necessity of endeavouring to escape the expences of imprisonment; but the judge having ordered him to be silent, and repeated his orders without effect, commanded that he should be taken from the bar by force.

The jury then heard the opinion of the judge, that good characters were of no weight against positive evidence, though they might turn the scale where it was doubtful; and that though, when two men attack each other, the death of either is only man-slaughter; but where one is the aggressor, as in the case before them, and, in pursuance of his first attack, kills the other, the law supposes the action, however sudden, to be malicious. They then deliberated upon their verdict, and determined that Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder, and Mr. Merchant, who had no sword, only of man-slaughter.

Thus ended this memorable trial, which lasted eight hours. Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to prison, where they were more closely confined, and loaded with irons of fifty pounds weight: four days afterwards they were sent back to the court to receive sentence; on which occasion Mr. Savage made, as far as it could be retained in memory, the following speech.

"It is now, my Lord, too late to offer any thing by way of defence or vindication; nor can we expect from your Lordships, in this court, but the sentence which the law requires you, as judges, to pronounce against men of our calamitous condition.——But we are also persuaded, that as mere men, and out of this seat of rigorous justice, you are susceptive of the tender passions, and too humane, not to commiserate the unhappy situation of those, whom the law sometimes perhaps——exacts——from you to pronounce upon. No doubt you distinguish between offences, which arise out of premeditation, and a disposition habituated to vice or immorality, and transgressions which are the unhappy and unforeseen effects of casual absence of reason, and sudden impulse of passion: we therefore hope you will contribute all you can to an extension of that mercy, which the gentlemen of the jury have been pleased to shew Mr. Merchant, who (allowing facts as sworn against us by the

evidence) has led us into this our calamity. I hope this will not be conſtrued as if we meant to reflect upon that gentleman, or remove any thing from us upon him, or that we repine the more at our fate, becauſe he has no participation of it. No, my Lord! For my part, I declare nothing could more ſoften my grief, than to be without any companion in ſo great a misfortune *." Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life, but from the mercy of the crown, which was very earneſtly ſolicited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the ſtory may obtain belief, was obſtructed only by his mother.

To prejudice the Queen againſt him, ſhe made uſe of an incident, which was omitted in the order of time, that it might be mentioned together with the purpoſe which it was made to ſerve. Mr. Savage, when he had diſcovered his birth, had an inceſſant deſire to ſpeak to his mother, who always avoided him in public, and refuſed him admiſſion into her houſe. One evening walking, as it was his cuſtom, in the ſtreet that ſhe inhabited, he ſaw the door of her houſe by accident open; he entered it, and finding no perſon in the paſſage to hinder him, went up ſtairs to ſalute her. She diſcovered him before he could enter her chamber, alarmed the family with the moſt diſtreſsful outcries, and when ſhe had by her ſcreams gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the houſe that villain, who had forced himſelf in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the moſt ſubmiſſive tenderneſs to ſoften her rage, hearing her utter ſo deteſtable an accuſation, thought it prudent to retire; and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to ſpeak to her.

But, ſhocked as he was with her falſehood and her cruelty, he imagined that ſhe intended no other uſe of her lie, than to ſet herſelf free from his embraces and ſolicitations, and was very far from ſuſpecting that ſhe would treaſure it in her memory, as an inſtrument of future wickedneſs, or that ſhe would endeavour for this fictitious aſſault to deprive him of his life.

But when the Queen was ſolicited for his pardon, and informed of the ſevere treatment which he had ſuffered from his judge, ſhe anſwerd, that however unjuſtifiable might be the manner of trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, ſhe could not think

* *Mr. Savage's Life.*

that man a proper object of the King's mercy, who had been capable of entering his mother's house in the night, with an intent to murder her.

By whom this atrocious calumny had been transmitted to the Queen; whether she that invented had the front to relate it; whether she found any one weak enough to credit it, or corrupt enough to concur with her in her hateful design, I know not but methods had been taken to persuade the Queen so strongly of the truth of it, that she for a long time refused to hear any of those who petitioned for his life.

Thus had Savage perished by the evidence of a bawd, a strumpet, and his mother, had not justice and compassion procured him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit and his calamities happened to reach the ear of the Countess of Hertford, who engaged in his support with all tenderness that is excited by pity, and all the zeal which is kindled by generosity; and, demanding an audience of the Queen, laid before her the whole series of his mother's cruelty, exposed the improbability of an accusation by which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and soon convinced her how little his former conduct could deserve to be mentioned as a reason for extraordinary severity.

The interposition of this Lady was so successful, that he was soon after admitted to bail, and on the 9th of March 1728, pleaded the King's pardon.

It is natural to enquire upon what motives his mother could prosecute him in a manner so outrageous and implacable; for what reason she could employ all the arts of malice, and all the snares of calumny, to take away the life of her own son, of a son who never injured her, who was never supported by her expence, nor obstructed any prospect of pleasures or advantage; why she should endeavour to destroy him by a lie—a lie which could not gain credit but must vanish of itself at the first moment of examination, and which only this can be said to make it probable, that it may be observed from her conduct, that the most execrable crimes are sometimes committed without apparent temptation.

This mother is still alive, and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was so often defeated, enjoyed the pleasure of reflecting, that the life, which she often endeavoured

to deſtroy, was at leaſt ſhortened by her maternal offices; that though ſhe could not tranſport her ſon to the plantations, bury him in the ſhop of a mechanic, or haſten the hand of the public executioner, ſhe has yet had the ſatisfaction of imbittering all his hours, and forcing him into exigences that hurried on his death.

It is by no means neceſſary to aggravate the enormity of this woman's conduct, by placing it in oppoſition to that of the Counteſs of Hertford; no one can fail to obſerve how much more amiable it is to relieve, than to oppreſs, and to reſcue innocence from deſtruction, than to deſtroy without an injury.

Mr. Savage, during his impriſonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under ſentence of death behaved with great firmneſs and equality of mind, and cofirmed by his fortitude the eſteem of thoſe who before admired him for his abilities. The peculiar circumſtances of his life were made more generally known by a ſhort account *, which was then publiſhed, and of which ſeveral thouſands were in a few weeks diſperſed over the nation: and the compaſſion of mankind opperated ſo powerfully in his favour, that he was enabled, by frequent preſents, not only to ſupport himſelf, but to aſſiſt Mr. Gregory in priſon; and when he was pardoned and releaſed, he found the number of his friends not leſſened.

The nature of the act for which he had been tried was in itſelf doubtful; of the evidences which appeared againſt him, the character of the man was not unexceptionable, that of the woman notoriouſly infamous: ſhe, whoſe teſtimony chiefly influenced the jury to condemn him, afterwards retracted her aſſertions. He always himſelf denied that he was drunk, as had been generally reported. Mr. Gregory, who is now Collector of Antigua, is ſaid to declare him far leſs criminal than he was imagined, even by ſome who favoured him: and Page himſelf aftewards confeſſed, that he had treated him with uncommon rigour. When all theſe particulars are rated together, perhaps the memory of Savage may not be much ſullied by his trial.

Some time after he had obtained his liberty, he met in the ſtreet the woman that had ſworn with ſo much malignity againſt him. She informed him that ſhe was in diſtreſs, and,

* *Written by Mr. Buckingham and another gentleman.*

with a degree of confidence not eaſily attainable, deſired him to relieve her. He, inſtead of inſulting her miſery, and taking pleaſure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury; and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himſelf.

This is an action which in ſome ages would have made a ſaint, and perhaps in others a hero, and which, without any hyperbolical encomiums, muſt be allowed to be an inſtance of uncommon generoſity, an act of complicated virtue; by which he at once relieved the poor, corrected the vicious, and forgave an enemy; by which he at once remitted the ſtrongeſt provocations, and exerciſed the moſt ardent charity.

Compaſſion was indeed the diſtinguiſhing quality of Savage; he never appeared inclined to take advantage of weakneſs, to attack the defenceleſs, or to preſs upon the falling: whoever was diſtreſſed was certain at leaſt of his good wiſhes; and when he could give no aſſiſtance to extricate them from misfortunes, he endeavoured to ſooth them by ſympathy and tenderneſs.

But when his heart was not ſoftened by the ſight of miſery, he was ſometimes obſtinate in his reſentment, and did not quickly loſe the remembrance of an injury. He always continued to ſpeak with anger of the inſolence and partiality of Page, and a ſhort time before his death revenged it by a ſatire *.

It is natural to enquire in what terms Mr. Savage ſpoke of this fatal action, when the danger was over, and he was under no neceſſity of uſing any art to ſet his conduct in the faireſt light. He was not willing to dwell upon it; and, if he tranſiently mentioned it, appeared neither to conſider himſelf as a murderer, nor as a man wholly free from the guilt of blood †. How much and how long he regretted it, appeared in a poem which he publiſhed many years afterwards. On occaſion of a copy of verſes in which the failings of good men were recounted, and in which the author had endeavoured to illuſtrate his poſition, that "the beſt may ſometimes deviate from virtue," by an inſtance of murder committed by Savage in the heat of wine, Savage remarked,

* *Printed in the late collection.*

† *In one of his letters he ſtyles it "a fatal quarrel, but too well known."*

that it was no very juſt repreſentation of a good man, to ſuppoſe him liable to drunkenneſs, and diſpoſed in his riots to cut throats.

He was now indeed at liberty, but was as before, without any other ſupport than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him; ſources by which he was ſometimes very liberally ſupplied, and which at other times were ſuddenly ſtopped; ſo that he ſpent his life between want and plenty; or, what was yet worſe, between beggary and extravagance; for as whatever he received was the gift of chance, which might as well favour him at one time as another, he was tempted to ſquander what he had, becauſe he always hoped to be immediately ſupplied.

Another cauſe of his profuſion was the abſurd kindneſs of his friends, who at once rewarded and enjoyed his abilities, by treating him at taverns, and habituating him to pleaſures which he could not afford to enjoy, and which he was not able to deny himſelf, though he purchaſed the luxury of a ſingle night by the anguiſh of cold and hunger for a week.

The experience of theſe inconveniences determined him to endeavour after ſome ſettled income, which having long found ſubmiſſion and intreaties fruitleſs, he attempted to extort from his mother by rougher methods. He had now, as he acknowledged, loſt that tenderneſs for her, which the whole ſeries of her cruelty had not been able wholly to repreſs, till he found, by the efforts which ſhe made for his deſtruction, that ſhe was not content with refuſing to aſſiſt him, and being neutral in his ſtruggles with poverty, but was as ready to ſnatch every opportunity of adding to his misfortunes, and that ſhe was to be conſidered as an enemy implacably malicious, whom nothing but his blood could ſatisfy. He therefore threatened to haraſs her with lampoons, to publiſh a copious narrative of her conduct, unleſs ſhe conſented to purchaſe an exemption from infamy, by allowing him a penſion.

This expedient proved ſucceſsful. Whether ſhame ſtill ſurvived, though virtue was extinct, or whether her relations had more delicacy than herſelf, and imagined that ſome of the darts which ſatire might point at her would glance upon them; Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promiſe to lay aſide his deſign of expoſing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a penſion of two hundred pounds a year.

This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life; and for ſome time he had no reaſon to complain of fortune; his appearance was ſplendid, his expences large, and his acquaintance extenſive. He was courted by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and careſſed by all who valued themſelves upon a refined taſte. To admire Mr. Savage, was a proof of diſcernment; and to be acquainted with him, was a title to poetical reputation. His preſence was ſufficient to make any place of public entertainment popular; and his approbation and example conſtituted the faſhion. So powerful is genius, when it is inveſted with the glitter of affluence! Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleaſed when they have an opportunity at once of gratifying their vanity, and practiſing their duty.

This interval of proſperity furniſhed him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its higheſt gradations to its loweſt; and, had he afterwards applied to dramatic poetry, he would perhaps not have had many ſuperiors; for as he never ſuffered any ſcene to paſs before his eyes without notice, he had treaſured in his mind all the different combinations of paſſions, and the innumerable mixtures of vice and virtue, which diſtinguiſh one character from another; and, as his conception was ſtrong, his expreſſions were clear, he eaſily received impreſſions from objects, and very forcibly tranſmitted them to others,

Of his exact obſervations on human life he has left a proof, which would do honour to the greateſt names, in a ſmall pamphlet, called, *The Author to be let* *, where he introduces Iſcariot Hackney, a proſtitute ſcribbler, giving an account of his birth, his education, his diſpoſition and morals, habits of life, and maxims of conduct. In the introduction are related many ſecret hiſtories of the petty writers of that time, but ſometimes mixed with ungenerous reflections on their birth, their circumſtances, or thoſe of their relations, nor can it be denied, that ſome paſſages are ſuch as Iſcariot Hackney might himſelf have produced.

He was accuſed likewiſe, of living in an appearance of friendſhip with ſome whom he ſatiriſed, and of making uſe of the confidence which he gained by a ſeeming kindneſs to diſcover failings and expoſe them: it muſt be con-

* *Printed in his Works*, vol. II. p 231.

feſſed, that Mr. Savage's eſteem was no very certain poſſeſſion, and that he would lampoon at one time thoſe whom he had praiſed at another.

It may be alledged, that the ſame man may change his principles, and that he, who was once deſervedly commended, may be afterwards ſatiriſed with equal juſtice, or that the poet was dazzled with the appearance of virtue, and found the man whom he had celebrated, when he had an opportunity of examining him more narrowly, unworthy of the panegyric which he had too haſtily beſtowed; and that, as a falſe ſatire ought to be recanted, for the ſake of him whoſe reputation may be injured, falſe praiſe ought likewiſe to be obviated, leſt the diſtinction between vice and virtue ſhould be loſt, leſt a bad man ſhould be truſted upon the credit of his encomiaſt, or leſt others ſhould endeavour to obtain the like praiſes by the ſame means.

But though theſe excuſes may be often plauſible, and ſometimes juſt, they are very ſeldom ſatisfactory to mankind; and the writer, who is not conſtant to his ſubject, quickly ſinks into contempt, his ſatire loſes its force, and his panegyric its value, and he is only conſidered at one time as a flatterer, and as a calumniator at another.

To avoid theſe imputations, it is only neceſſary to follow the rules of virtue, and to preſerve an unvaried regard to truth. For though it is undoubtedly poſſible, that a man however cautious, may be ſometimes deceived by an artful appearance of virtue, or by falſe evidences of guilt, ſuch errors will not be frequent; and it will be allowed, that the name of an author would never have been made contemptible, had no man ever ſaid what he did not think, or miſled others but when he was himſelf deceived.

If *The Author to be let* was firſt publiſhed in a ſingle pamphlet, and afterwards inſerted in a collection of pieces relating to the Dunciad, which were addreſſed by Mr. Savage to the Earl of Middleſex, in a * dedication which he was prevailed upon to ſign, though he did not write it, and in which there are ſome poſitions, that the true author would perhaps not have publiſhed under his own name, and on which Mr. Savage afterwards reflected with no great ſatisfaction; the enumeration of the bad effects of the uncontroled freedom of the preſs, and the aſſertion that the "liberties taken by the writers of Journals with their ſupe-

* *See his Works*, vol. II. p. 233.

riors were exorbitant and unjuſtifiable," very ſill became men, who have themſelves not always ſhewn the exacteſt regard to the laws of ſubordination in their writings, and who have often ſatiriſed thoſe that at leaſt thought themſelves their ſuperiors, as they were eminent for their hereditary rank, and employed in the higheſt offices of the kingdom. But this is not only an inſtance of that partiality which almoſt every man indulges with regard to himſelf; the liberty of the preſs is a bleſſing when we are inclined to write againſt others, and a calamity when we find ourſelves, overborne by the multitude of our aſſailants; as the power of the crown is always thought too great by thoſe who ſuffer by its influence, and too little by thoſe in whoſe favour it is exerted; and a ſtanding army is generally accounted neceſſary by thoſe who command, and dangerous and oppreſſive by thoſe who ſupport it.

Mr. Savage was likewiſe very far from believing, that the letters annexed to each ſpecies of bad poets in the Bathos, were, as he was directed to aſſert, "ſet down at random;" for when he was charged by one of his friends with putting his name to ſuch an improbability, he had no other anſwer to make, than that "he did not think of it;" and his friend had too much tenderneſs to reply, that next to the crime of writing contrary to what he thought, was that of writing without thinking.

After having remarked what is falſe in this dedication, it is proper that I obſerve the impartiality which I recommend, by declaring what Savage aſſerted, that the account of the circumſtances which attended the publication of the Dunciad, however ſtrange and improbable, was exactly true.

The publication of this piece at this time raiſed Mr. Savage a great number of enemies among thoſe that were attacked by Mr. Pope, with whom he was conſidered as a kind of confederate, and whom he was ſuſpected of ſupplying with private intelligence and ſecret incidents: ſo that the ignominy of an informer was added to the terror of a ſatiriſt.

That he was not altogether free from literary hypocriſy, and that he ſometimes ſpoke one thing, and wrote another, cannot be denied; becauſe he himſelf confeſſed, that, when

he lived in great familiarity with Dennis, he wrote an epigram * againſt him.

Mr. Savage however ſet all the malice of all the pigmy writers at defiance, and thought the friendſhip of Mr. Pope cheaply purchaſed by being expoſed to their cenſure and their hatred; nor had he any reaſon to repent of the preference, for he found Mr. Pope a ſteady and unalienable friend almoſt to the end of his life.

About this time, notwithſtanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he publiſhed a panegyric on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with twenty guineas, a ſum not very large, if either the excellence of the performance, or the affluence of the patron be conſidered; but greater than he afterwards obtained from a perſon of yet higher rank, and more deſirous in appearance of being diſtinguiſhed as a patron of literature.

As he was very far from approving the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and in converſation mentioned him ſometimes with acrimony, and generally with contempt; as he was one of thoſe who were always zealous in their aſſertions of the juſtice of the late oppoſition, jealous of the rights of the people, and alarmed by the long continued triumph of the court; it was natural to aſk him what could induce him to employ his poetry in praiſe of that man who was, in his opinion, an enemy to liberty, and an oppreſſor of his country? He alledged, that he was then dependent upon the Lord Tyrconnel, who was an implicit follower of the miniſtry; and that being enjoined by him, not without menaces, to write in praiſe of his leader, he had not reſolution ſufficient to ſacrifice the pleaſure of affluence to that of integrity.

On this, and on many other occaſions, he was ready to lament the miſery of living at the tables of other men, which was his fate from the beginning to the end of his life; for I know not whether he ever had for three months

* *This epigram was, I believe, never publiſhed.*

Should Dennis publiſh you had ſtabb'd your brother,
Lampoon'd your monarch, or debauch'd your mother;
Say, what revenge on Dennis can be had,
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad?
On one ſo poor you cannot take the law,
On one ſo old your ſword you ſcorn to draw,
Uncag'd then, let the harmleſs monſter rage,
Secure in dulneſs, madneſs, want, and age.

together, a ſettled habitation, in which he could claim a right of reſidence.

To this unhappy ſtate it is juſt to impute much of the inconſtancy of his conduct; for though a readineſs to comply with the inclination of others was no part of his natural character, yet he was ſometimes obliged to relax his obſtinacy, and ſubmit his own judgment, and even his virtue, to the government of thoſe by whom he was ſupported: ſo that, if his miſeries were ſometimes the conſequences of his faults, he ought not yet to be wholly excluded from compaſſion, becauſe his faults were very often the effects of his misfortunes.

In this gay period * of his life, while he was ſurrounded by affluence and pleaſure, he publiſhed *The Wanderer*, a moral poem, of which the deſign is compriſed in theſe lines:

> I fly all public care, all venal ſtrife,
> To try the ſtill compar'd with active life;
> To prove, by theſe the ſons of men may owe
> The fruits of bliſs to burſting clouds of woe;
> That ev'n calamity, by thought refiu'd,
> Inſpirits and adorns the thinking mind.

And more diſtinctly in the following paſſage:

> By woe, the ſoul to daring actions ſwells;
> By woe, in plaintleſs patience it excells;
> From patience prudent clear experience ſprings,
> And traces knowledge through the courſe of things!
> Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, ſucceſs,
> Renown: whatever men covet and careſs.

This performance was always conſidered by himſelf as his maſter piece; and Mr. Pope when he aſked his opinion of it, told him, that he read it once over, and was not diſpleaſed with it, that it gave him more pleaſure at the ſecond peruſal, and delighted him ſtill more at the third.

It has been generally objected to *The Wanderer*, that the diſpoſition of the parts is irregular; that the deſign is obſcure, and the plan perplexed; that the images, however beautiful, ſucceed each other without order; and that the whole performance is not ſo much a regular fabric, as a heap of ſhining materials thrown together by accident, which

* 1729.

ſtrikes rather with the ſolemn magnificence of a ſtupendous ruin, than the elegant grandeur of a finiſhed pile.

This criticiſm is univerſal, and therefore it is reaſonable to believe it at leaſt in a great degree juſt; but Mr. Savage was always of a contrary opinion, and thought his drift could only be miſſed by negligence or ſtupidity, and that the whole plan was regular and the parts diſtinct.

It was never denied to abound with ſtrong repreſentations of nature, and juſt obſervations upon life; and it may eaſily be obſerved, that moſt of his pictures have an evident tendency to illuſtrate his firſt great poſition, "that good is the conſequence of evil." The ſun that burns up the mountains, fructifies the vales; the deluge that ruſhes down the broken rocks with dreadful impetuoſity, is ſeparated into purling brooks; and the rage of the hurricane purifies the air.

Even in this poem he has not been able to forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mother, which, though remarkably delicate and tender, is a proof how deep an impreſſion it had upon his mind.

This muſt be at leaſt acknowledged, which ought to be thought equivalent to many other excellencies, that this poem can promote no other purpoſes than thoſe of virtue, and that it is written with a very ſtrong ſenſe of the efficacy of religion.

But my province is rather to give the hiſtory of Mr. Savage's performances, than to diſplay their beauties, or to obviate the criticiſms which they have occaſioned; and therefore I ſhall not dwell upon the particular paſſages which deſerve applauſe: I ſhall neither ſhew the excellence of his deſcriptions, nor expatiate on the terrific portrait of ſuicide, nor point out the artful touches, by which he has diſtinguiſhed the intellectual features of the rebels, who ſuffered death in his laſt canto. It is, however, proper to obſerve, that Mr. Savage always declared the characters wholly fictitious, and without the leaſt alluſion to any real perſons or actions.

From a poem ſo diligently laboured, and ſo ſucceſsfully finiſhed, it might be reaſonably expected that he ſhould have gained conſiderable advantage; nor can it, without ſome degree of indignation and concern, be told, that he ſold the copy for ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two laſt ſheets of the work might be

reprinted, of which he had in his abſence intruſted the correction to a friend, who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

A ſuperſtitious regard to the correction of his ſheets was one of Mr. Savage's peculiarities; he often altered, reviſed, recurred to his firſt reading or punctuation, and again adopted the alteration; he was dubious and irreſolute without end, as on a queſtion of the laſt importance, and at laſt was ſeldom ſatisfied: the intruſion or omiſſion of a comma was ſufficient to diſcompoſe him, and he would lament an error of a ſingle letter as a heavy calamity. In one of his letters relating to an impreſſion of ſome verſes, he remarks, that he had with regard to the correction of the proof, "a ſpell upon him;" and indeed the anxiety with which he dwelt upon the minuteſt and moſt trifling niceties, deſerved no other name than that of faſcination.

That he ſold ſo valuable a performance for ſo ſmall a price, was not to be imputed either to neceſſity, by which the learned and ingenious are often obliged to ſubmit to very hard conditions; or to avarice by which the booksellers are frequently incited to oppreſs that genius by which they are ſupported; but to that intemperate deſire of pleaſure, and habitual ſlavery to his paſſions, which involved him in many perplexites. He happened at that time to be engaged in the purſuit of ſome trifling gratification, and, being without money for the preſent occaſion, ſold his poem to the firſt bidder, and perhaps for the firſt price that was propoſed, and would probably have been content with leſs, if leſs had been offered him.

This poem was addreſſed to the Lord Tyrconnel, not only in the firſt lines, but in a formal dedication filled with the higheſt ſtrains of panegyric, and the warmeſt profeſſions of gratitude, but by no means remarkable for delicacy of connection or elegance of ſtyle.

Theſe praiſes in a ſhort time he found himſelf inclined to retract, being diſcarded by the man on whom he had beſtowed them, and whom he then immediately diſcovered not to have deſerved them. Of this quarrel, which every day made more bitter, Lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage aſſigned very different reaſons, which might perhaps all in reality concur, though they were not all convenient to be alledged by either party. Lord Tyrconnel affirmed, that it was the conſtant practice of Mr. Savage to enter a tavern with any company that propoſed it, drink the moſt ex-

penſive wines with great profuſion, and when the reckoning was demanded, to be without money: If, as it often happened, his company were willing to defray his part, the affair ended, without any ill conſequences; but, if they were refractory, and expected that the wine ſhould be paid for by him that drank it, his method of compoſition was, to take them with him to his own apartment, aſſume the government of the houſe, and order the butler, in an imperious manner, to bring the beſt wine in the cellar before his company, who often drank till they forgot the reſpect due to the houſe in which they were entertained, indulged themſelves in the utmoſt extravagance of merriment, practiſed the moſt licentious frolicks, and committed all the outrages of drunkenneſs.

Nor was this the only charge which Lord Tyrconnel brought againſt him; having given him a collection of valuable books, ſtamped with his own arms, he had the mortification to ſee them, in a ſhort time, expoſed to ſale upon the ſtalls, it being uſual with Mr. Savage, when he wanted a ſmall ſum, to take his books to the pawn-broker.

Whoever was acquainted with Mr. Savage eaſily credited both theſe accuſations: for, having been obliged from his firſt entrance into the world to ſubſiſt upon expedients, affluence was not able to exalt him above them; and ſo much was he delighted with wine and converſation, and ſo long had he been accuſtomed to live by chance, that he would at any time go to the tavern without ſcruple, and truſt for the reckoning to the liberality of his company, and frequently of company to whom he was very little known.

This conduct indeed very ſeldom drew upon him thoſe inconveniences that might be feared by any other perſon; for his converſation was ſo entertaining, and his addreſs ſo pleaſing, that few thought the pleaſure which they received from him dearly purchaſed, by paying for his wine. It was his peculiar happineſs, that he ſcarcely ever found a ſtranger, whom he did not leave a friend; but it muſt likewiſe be added, that he had not often a friend long, without obliging him to become a ſtranger.

Mr. Savage, on the other hand, declared, that Lord Tyrconnel * quarrelled with him, becauſe he would ſub-

* *His expreſſion in one of his letters was, "that Lord Tyrconnel had involved his eſtate, and therefore poorly ſought an occaſion to quarrel with him."*

tract from his own luxury and extravagance what he had promiſed to allow him, and that his reſentment was only a plea for the violation of his promiſe: He aſſerted, that he had done nothing that ought to exclude him from that ſubſiſtence which he thought not ſo much a favour, as a debt, ſince it was offered him upon conditions, which he had never broken; and that his only fault was, that he could not be ſupported with nothing.

He acknowledged, that Lord Tyrconnel often exhorted him to regulate his method of life, and not to ſpend all his nights in taverns, and that he appeared very deſirous that he would paſs thoſe hours with him, which he ſo freely beſtowed upon others. This demand Mr. Savage conſidered as a cenſure of his conduct, which he would never patiently bear; and which, in the latter and cooler part of his life, was ſo offenſive to him, that he declared it as his reſolution, "to ſpurn that friend who ſhould preſume to dictate to him;" and it is not likely, that in his earlier years he received admonitions with more calmneſs.

He was likewiſe inclined to reſent ſuch expectations, as tending to infringe his liberty, of which he was very jealous, when it was neceſſary to the gratification of his paſſions; and declared, that the requeſt was ſtill more unreaſonable, as the company to which he was to have been confined was inſupportably diſagreeable. This aſſertion affords another inſtance of that inconſiſtency of his writings with his converſation, which was ſo often to be obſerved. He forgot how laviſhly he had in his Dedication to *The Wanderer* extolled the delicacy and penetration, the humanity and generoſity, the candour and politeneſs, of the man, whom, when he no longer loved him, he declared to be a wretch without underſtanding, without good-nature, and without juſtice; of whoſe name he thought himſelf obliged to leave no trace in any future edition of his writings; and accordingly blotted it out of that copy of *The Wanderer* which was in his hands.

During his continuance with Lord Tyrconnel, he wrote *The Triumph of Health and Mirth*, on the recovery of Lady Tyrconnel from a languiſhing illneſs. This performance is remarkable, not only for the gaiety of the ideas, and the melody of the numbers, but for the agreeable fiction upon which it is formed. Mirth, overwhelmed with ſorrow for the ſickneſs of her favourite, takes a flight in queſt of her ſiſter Health, whom ſhe finds reclined upon the brow of a

lofty mountain, amidſt the fragrance of perpetual ſpring, with the breezes of the morning ſporting about her. Being ſolicited by her ſiſter Mirth, ſhe readily promiſes her aſſiſtance, flies away in a cloud, and impregnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, by which the ſickneſs of Belinda is relieved.

As the reputation of his abilities, the particular circumſtances of his birth and life, the ſplendour of his appearance and the diſtinction which was for ſome time paid him by Lord Tyrconnel, intitled him to familiarity with perſons of higher rank than thoſe to whoſe converſation he had been before admitted, he did not fail to gratify that curioſity, which induced him to take a nearer view of thoſe whom their birth, their employments, or their fortunes, neceſſarily place at a diſtance from the greateſt part of mankind, and to examine whether their merit was magnified or diminiſhed by the medium through which it was contemplated; whether the ſplendour with which they dazzled their admirers was inherent in themſelves, or only reflected on them by the objects that ſurrounded them; and whether great men were ſelected for high ſtations, or high ſtations made great men.

For this purpoſe he took all opportunities of converſing familiarly with thoſe who were moſt conſpicuous at that time for their power or their influence; he watched their looſer moments, and examined their domeſtic behaviour, with that acuteneſs which nature had given him, and which the uncommon variety of his life had contributed to increaſe, and that inquiſitiveneſs which muſt always be produced in a vigorous mind, by an abſolute freedom from all preſſing or domeſtic engagements. His diſcernment was quick, and therefore he ſoon found in every perſon, and in every affair, ſomething that deſerved attention; he was ſupported by others, without any care for himſelf, and was therefore at leiſure to purſue his obſervations.

More circumſtances to conſtitute a critic on human life could not eaſily concur; nor indeed could any man, who aſſumed from accidental advantages more praiſe than he could juſtly claim from his real merit, admit an acquaintance more dangerous than that of Savage; of whom likewiſe it muſt be confeſſed, that abilities really exalted above the common level, or virtue refined from paſſion, or proof againſt corruption, could not eaſily find an abler judge, or a warmer advocate.

What was the result of Mr. Savage's enquiry, though he was not much accuſtomed to conceal his diſcoveries, it may not be entirely ſafe to relate, becauſe the perſons whoſe characters he criticiſed are powerful; and power and reſentment are ſeldom ſtrangers; nor would it perhaps be wholly juſt, becauſe what he aſſerted in converſation might though true in general, be heightened by ſome momentary ardour of imagination, and, as it can be delivered only from memory, may be imperfectly repreſented; ſo that the picture at firſt aggravated, and then unſkilfully copied, may be juſtly ſuſpected to retain no great reſemblance of the original.

It may however be obſerved, that he did not appear to have formed very elevated ideas of thoſe to whom the adminiſtration of affairs, or the conduct of parties, has been entruſted; who have been conſidered as the advocates of the crown, or the guardians of the people; and who have obtained the moſt implicit confidence, and the loudeſt applauſes. Of one particular perſon, who has been at one time ſo popular as to be generally eſteemed, and at another ſo formidable as to be univerſally deteſted, he obſerved, that his acquiſitions had been ſmall, or that his capacity was narrow, and that the whole range of his mind was from obſcenity to politics, and from politics to obſcenity.

But the opportunity of indulging his ſpeculations on great characters was now at an end. He was baniſhed from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without proſpect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the virtues by which he was diſtinguiſhed, he had made no proviſion againſt a misfortune like this. And though it is not to be imagined but that the ſeparation muſt for ſome time have been preceded by coldneſs, peeviſhneſs, or neglect, though it was undoubtedly the conſequence of accumulated provocations on both ſides; yet every one that knew Savage will readily believe, that to him it was ſudden as a ſtroke of thunder; that, though he might have tranſiently ſuſpected it, he had never ſuffered any thought ſo unpleaſing to ſink into his mind, but that he had driven it away by amuſements, or dreams of future felicity and affluence, and had never taken any meaſures by which he might prevent a precipitation from plenty to indigence.

This quarrel and ſeparation, and the difficulties to which Mr. Savage was expoſed by them, were ſoon known both

to his friends and enemies; nor was it long before he perceived, from the behaviour of both, how much is added to the luſtre of genius by the ornaments of wealth.

His condition did not appear to excite much compaſſion; for he had not always been careful to uſe the advantages he enjoyed, with that moderation which ought to have been with more than uſual caution, preſerved by him, who knew, if he had reflected, that he was only a dependant on the bounty of another; whom he could expect to ſupport him no longer than he endeavoured to preſerve his favour by complying with his inclinations, and whom he nevertheleſs fet at defiance, and was continually irritating by negligence or encroachments.

Examples need not be ſought at any great diſtance to prove, that ſuperiority of fortune has a natural tendency to kindle pride, and that pride ſeldom fails to exert itſelf in contempt and inſult; and if this is often the effect of hereditary wealth, and of honours enjoyed only by the merit of others, it is ſome extenuation of any indecent triumphs to which this unhappy man may have been betrayed, that his proſperity was heightened by the force of novelty, and made more intoxicating by a ſenſe of the miſery in which he had ſo long languiſhed, and perhaps of the inſults which he had formerly borne, and which he might now think himſelf intitled to revenge. It is too common for thoſe who have unjuſtly ſuffered pain, to inflict it likewiſe in their turn with the ſame injuſtice, and to imagine that they have a right to treat others as they have themſelves been treated.

That Mr. Savage was too much elevated by any good fortune, is generally known; and ſome paſſages of his Introduction to *The Author to be let* ſufficiently ſhew, that he did not wholly refrain from ſuch ſatire as he afterwards thought very unjuſt, when he was expoſed to it himſelf; for when he was afterwards ridiculed in the character of a diſtreſſed poet, he very eaſily diſcovered, that diſtreſs was not a proper ſubject for merriment, or topic of invective. He was then able to diſcern, that, if miſery be the effect of virtue, it ought to be reverenced; if of ill-fortune, to be pitied; and if of vice, not to be inſulted, becauſe it is perhaps itſelf a puniſhment adequate to the crime by which it was produced. And the humanity of that man can deſerve no panegyric, who is capable of reproaching a criminal in the hands of the executioner.

But theſe reflections though they readily occurred to him in the firſt and laſt parts of his life, were, I am afraid, for a long time forgotten; at leaſt they were, like many other maxims, treaſured up in his mind, rather for ſhew than uſe, and operated very little upon his conduct, however elegantly he might ſometimes explain, or however forcibly he might inculcate, them.

His degradation therefore from the condition which he had enjoyed with ſuch wanton thoughtleſſneſs, was conſidered by many as an occaſion to triumph. Thoſe who had before paid their court to him without ſucceſs, ſoon returned the contempt which they had ſuffered; and they who had received favours from him, for ſuch favours as he could beſtow he was very liberal, did not always remember them. So much more certain are the effects of reſentment than of gratitude: it is not only to many more pleaſing to recollect thoſe faults which place others below them, than thoſe virtues by which they are themſelves comparatively depreſſed; but it is likewiſe more eaſy to neglect, than to recompenſe; and though there are few who will practiſe a laborious virtue, there will never be wanting multitudes that will indulge an eaſy vice.

Savage, however, was very little diſturbed at the marks of contempt which his ill-fortune brought upon him, from thoſe whom he never eſteemed, and with whom he never conſidered himſelf as levelled by any calamities: and though it was not without ſome uneaſineſs that he ſaw ſome, whoſe friendſhip he valued, change their behaviour; he yet obſerved their coldneſs without much emotion, conſidered them as the ſlaves of fortune and the worſhippers of proſperity, and was more inclined to deſpiſe them, than to lament himſelf.

It does not appear that, after this return of his wants, he found mankind equally favourable to him, as at his firſt appearance in the world. His ſtory, though in reality not leſs melancholy, was leſs affecting, becauſe it was no longer new; it therefore procured no new friends; and thoſe that had formerly relieved him, thought they might now conſign him to others. He was now likewiſe conſidered by many rather as criminal, than as unhappy; for the friends of Lord Tyrconnel, and of his mother, were ſufficiently induſtrious to publiſh his weakneſſes, which were indeed very numerous; and nothing was forgotten, that might make him either hateful or ridiculous.

It cannot but be imagined, that ſuch repreſentations of his faults muſt make great numbers leſs ſenſible of his diſtreſs; many who had only an opportunity to hear one part, made no ſcruple to propagate the account which they received; many aſſiſted their circulation from malice or revenge; and perhaps many pretended to credit them, that they might with a better grace withdraw their regard, or withold their aſſiſtance.

Savage however was not one of thoſe who ſuffered himſelf to be injured without reſiſtance, nor was leſs diligent in expoſing the faults of Lord Tyrconnel, over whom he obtained at leaſt this advantage, that he drove him firſt to the practice of outrage and violence; for he was ſo much provoked by the wit and virulence of Savage, that he came with a number of attendants, that did no honour to his courage, to beat him at a coffee-houſe. But it happened that he had left the place a few minutes, and his lordſhip had, without danger, the pleaſure of boaſting how he would have treated him. Mr. Savage went next day to repay his viſit at his own houſe; but was prevailed on, by his domeſtics, to retire without inſiſting upon ſeeing him.

Lord Tyrconnel was accuſed by Mr. Savage of ſome actions, which ſcarcely any provocations will be thought ſufficient to juſtify; ſuch as ſeizing what he had in his lodgings, and other inſtances of wanton cruelty, by which he increaſed the diſtreſs of Savage, without any advantage to himſelf.

Theſe mutual accuſations were retorted on both ſides, for many years, with the utmoſt degree of virulence and rage; and time ſeemed rather to augment than diminiſh their reſentment. That the anger of Mr. Savage ſhould be kept alive, is not ſtrange, becauſe he felt every day the conſequences of the quarrel; but it might reaſonably have been hoped, that Lord Tyrconnel might have relented, and at length have forgot thoſe provocations, which, however they might have once inflamed him, had not in reality much hurt him.

The ſpirit of Mr. Savage indeed never ſuffered him to ſolicit a reconciliation; he returned reproach for reproach, and inſult for inſult; his ſuperiority of wit ſupplied the diſadvantages of fortune, and enabled him to form a party, and prejudice great numbers in his favour.

But though this might be ſome gratification of his vanity, it afforded very little relief to his neceſſities; and he was very frequently reduced to uncommon hardſhips, of which, however, he never made any mean or importunate complaints, being formed rather to bear miſery with fortitude, than enjoy proſperity with moderation.

He now thought himſelf again at liberty to expoſe the cruelty of his mother, and therefore, I believe, about this time, publiſhed *The Baſtard*, a poem remarkable for the vivacious ſallies of thought in the beginning, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of baſe birth; and the pathetic ſentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he ſuffered by the crime of his parents.

The vigour and ſpirit of the verſes, the peculiar circumſtances of the author, the novelty of the ſubject, and the notoriety of the ſtory to which the alluſions are made, procured this performance a very favourable reception; great numbers were immediately diſperſed, and editions were multiplied with unuſual rapidity.

One circumſtance attended the publication, which Savage uſed to relate with great ſatisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem was with "due reverence" inſcribed, happened then to be at Bath, where ſhe could not conveniently retire from cenſure, or conceal herſelf from obſervation; and no ſooner did the reputation of the poem begin to ſpread, than ſhe heard it repeated in all places of concourſe, nor could ſhe enter the aſſembly-rooms, or croſs the walks, without being ſaluted with ſome lines from *The Baſtard*.

This was perhaps the firſt time that ever ſhe diſcovered a ſenſe of ſhame, and on this occaſion the power of wit was very conſpicuous; the wretch who had, without ſcruple, proclaimed herſelf an adultreſs, and who had firſt endeavoured to ſtarve her ſon, then to tranſport him, and afterwards to hang him, was not able to bear the repreſentation of her own conduct; but fled from reproach, though ſhe felt no pain from guilt, and left Bath with the utmoſt haſte, to ſhelter herſelf among the crowds of London.

Thus Savage had the ſatisfaction of finding, that though he could not reform his mother, he could puniſh her, and that he did not always ſuffer alone.

The pleaſure which he received from this increaſe of his poetical reputation, was ſufficient for ſome time to overballance the miſeries of want, which this performance did not

much alleviate; for it was ſold for a very trivial ſum to a bookſeller, who, though the ſucceſs was ſo uncommon that five impreſſions were ſold, of which many were undoubtedly very numerous, had not generoſity ſufficient to admit the unhappy writer to any of the profit.

The ſale of this poem was always mentioned by Savage with the utmoſt elevation of heart, and referred to by him as an inconteſtable proof of a general acknowledgement of his abilities. It was indeed the only production of which he could juſtly boaſt a general reception.

But though he did not loſe the opportunity which ſucceſs gave him, of ſetting a high rate on his abilities, but paid due deference to the ſufferages of mankind when they were given in his favour, he did not ſuffer his eſteem of himſelf to depend upon others, nor found any thing ſacred in the voice of the people when they were inclined to cenſure him; he then readily ſhewed the folly of expecting that the public would judge right, obſerved how ſlowly poetical merit had often forced its way into the world; he contented himſelf with the applauſe of men of judgment, and was ſomewhat diſpoſed to exclude all thoſe from the character of men of judgment, who did not applaud him.

But he was at other times more favourable to mankind than to think them blind to the beauties of his works, and imputed the ſlowneſs of their ſale to other cauſes; either they were publiſhed at a time when the town was empty, or when the attention of the public was engroſſed by ſome ſtruggle in the parliament, or ſome other object of general concern; or they were by the neglect of the publiſher not diligently diſperſed, or by his avarice not advertiſed with ſufficient frequency. Addreſs, or induſtry, or liberality, was always wanting; and the blame was laid rather on any perſon than the author.

By arts like theſe, arts which every man practiſes in ſome degree, and to which too much of the little tranquility of life is to be aſcribed, Savage was always able to live at peace with himſelf. Had he indeed only made uſe of theſe expedients to alleviate the loſs or want of fortune or reputation, or any other advantages, which it is not in man's power to beſtow upon himſelf, they might have been juſtly mentioned as inſtances of a philoſophical mind, and very properly propoſed to imitation of multitudes, who, for want of diverting their imaginations with the ſame dexterity, languiſh under afflictions which might be eaſily removed.

It were doubtleſs to be wiſhed, that truth and reaſon were univerſally prevalent; that every thing were eſtcemed according to its real value; and that men would ſecure themſelves from being diſappointed in their endeavours after happineſs, by placing it only in virtue, which is always to be obtained; but if adventitious and foreign pleaſures muſt be purſued, it would be perhaps of ſome benefit, ſince that purſuit muſt frequently be fruitleſs, if the practice of Savage could be thought, that folly might be an antidote to folly, and one fallacy be obviated by another.

But the danger of this pleaſing intoxication muſt not be concealed; nor indeed can any one, after having obſerved the life of Savage, need to be cautioned againſt it. By imputing none of his miſeries to himſelf, he continued to act upon the ſame principles, and to follow the ſame path; was never made wiſer by his ſufferings, nor preſerved by one misfortune from falling into another. He proceeded throughout his life to tread the ſame ſteps on the ſame circle; always applauding his paſt conduct, or at leaſt forgetting it, to amuſe himſelf with phantoms of happineſs, which were dancing before him; and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reaſon, when it would have diſcovered the illuſion, and ſhewn him, what he never wiſhed to ſee, his real ſtate.

He is even accuſed, after having lulled his imagination with thoſe ideal opiates, of having tried the ſame experiment upon his conſcience; and, having accuſtomed himſelf to impute all deviations from the right to foreign cauſes, it is certain that he was upon every occaſion too eaſily reconciled to himſelf, and that he appeared very little to regret thoſe practices which had impaired his reputation. The reigning error of his life was, that he miſtook the love for the practice of virtue, and was indeed not ſo much a good man, as the friend of goodneſs.

This at leaſt muſt be allowed him, that he always preſerved a ſtrong ſenſe of the dignity, the beauty, and the neceſſity of virtue, and that he never contributed deliberately to ſpread corruption amongſt mankind. His actions, which were generally precipitate, were often blameable; but his writings being the productions of ſtudy uniformly tended to the exaltation of the mind, and the propagation of morality and piety.

Theſe writings may improve mankind, when his failings ſhall be forgotten; and therefore he muſt be conſidered,

upon the whole, as a benefactor to the world; nor can his perſonal example do any hurt, ſince, whoever hears of his faults, will hear of the miſeries which they brought upon him, and which would deſerve leſs pity, had not his condition been ſuch as made his faults pardonable. He may be conſidered as a child expoſed to all the temptations of indigence, at an age when reſolution was not yet ſtrengthened by conviction, nor virtue confirmed by habit; a circumſtance which in his *Baſtard* he laments in a very affecting manner;

——No Mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer:
No Father's guardian-hand my youth maintain'd
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice reſtrain'd.

The Baſtard, however it might provoke or mortify his mother, could not be expected to melt her to compaſſion, ſo that he was ſtill under the ſame want of the neceſſities of life; and he therefore exerted all the intereſt which his wit, or his birth, or his misfortunes, could procure, to obtain, upon the death of Euſden, the place of Poet Laureat, and proſecuted his application with ſo much diligence, that the King publicly declared it his intention to beſtow it upon him; but ſuch was the fate of Savage, that even the King, when he intended his advantage, was diſappointed in his ſchemes; for the lord Chamberlain, who has the diſpoſal of the laurel, as one of the appendages of his office, either did not know the King's deſign, or did not approve it, or thought the nomination of the Laureat an encroachment upon his rights, and therefore beſtowed the laurel upon Colley Cibber.

Mr. Savage, thus diſappointed, took a reſolution of applying to the queen, that, having once given him life, ſhe would enable him to ſupport it, and therefore publiſhed a ſhort poem on her birth-day, to which he gave the odd title of *Volunteer Laureat*. The event of this eſſay he has himſelf related in the following letter, which he prefixed to the poem, when he afterwards reprinted it in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, from whence I have copied it entire *, as this was one of the few attempts in which Mr. Savage ſucceeded.

* *The poem is inſerted in the late collection.*

"Mr. URBAN,

"In your Magazine for February you publiſhed the laſt *Volunteer Laureat*, written on a very melancholy occaſion, the death of the royal patroneſs of arts and literature in general, and of the author of that poem in particular; I now ſend you the firſt that Mr. Savage wrote under that title.—This gentleman, notwithſtanding a very conſiderable intereſt, being, on the death of Mr. Euſden, diſappointed of the Laureat's place, wrote the before-mentioned poem; which was no ſooner publiſhed, but the late Queen ſent to a bookſeller for it: the author had not at that time a friend either to get him introduced, or his poem preſented at court; yet ſuch was the unſpeakable goodneſs of that Princeſs, that notwithſtanding this act of ceremony was wanting, in a few days after publication, Mr. Savage received a Bank-bill of fifty pounds, and a gracious meſſage from her Majeſty, by the Lord North and Guilford, to this effect; "That her Majeſty was highly pleaſed with the verſes; that ſhe took particularly kind his lines there relating to the King; that he had permiſſion to write annually on the ſame ſubject; and that he ſhould yearly receive the like preſent, till ſomething better (which was her Majeſty's intention) could be done for him." After this he was permitted to preſent one of his annual poems to her Majeſty, had the honour of kiſſing her hand, and met with the moſt gracious reception.

Yours, &c.

Such was the performance, and ſuch its reception; a reception which, though by no means unkind, was yet not in the higheſt degree generous: to chain down the genius of a writer to an annual panegyric, ſhewed in the Queen too much deſire of hearing her own praiſes, and a greater regard to herſelf than to him on whom her bounty was conferred. It was a kind of avaricious generoſity, by which flattery was rather purchaſed, than genius rewarded.

Mrs. Oldfield had formerly given him the ſame allowance with much more heroic intention; ſhe had no other view than to enable him to proſecute his ſtudies, and to ſet himſelf above the want of aſſiſtance, and was contented with doing good without ſtipulating for encomiums.

Mr. Savage however was not at liberty to make exceptions, but was raviſhed with the favours which he had receiv-

ed, and probably yet more with thoſe which he was promiſed; he conſidered himſelf now as a favourite of the Queen, and did not doubt but a few annual poems would eſtabliſh him in ſome profitable employment.

He therefore aſſumed the title of *Volunteer Laureat*, not without ſome reprehenſions from Cibber, who informed him, that the title of *Laureat* was a mark of honour conferred by the King, from whom all honour is derived, and which therefore no man has a right to beſtow upon himſelf; and added, that he might, with equal propriety, ſtyle himſelf a Volunteer Lord, or Volunteer Baronet. It cannot be denied that the remark was juſt; but Savage did not think any title, which was conferred upon Mr. Cibber, ſo honourable as that the uſurpation of it could be imputed to him as an inſtance of very exorbitant vanity, and therefore continued to write under the ſame title, and received every year the ſame reward.

He did not appear to conſider theſe encomiums as teſts of his abilities, or as any thing more than annual hints to the Queen of her promiſe, or acts of ceremony, by the performance of which he was intitled to his penſion, and therefore did not labour them with great diligence, or print more than fifty each year, except that for ſome of the laſt years he regularly inſerted them in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, by which they were diſperſed over the kingdom.

Of ſome of them he had himſelf ſo low an opinion, that he intended to omit them in the collection of poems, for which he printed propoſals, and ſolicited ſubſcriptions; nor can it ſeem ſtrange, that being confined to the ſame ſubject, he ſhould be at ſometimes indolent, and at others unſucceſsful; that he ſhould ſometimes delay a diſagreeable taſk, till it was too late to perform it well; or that he ſhould ſometimes repeat the ſame ſentiment on the ſame occaſion, or at others be miſled by an attempt after novelty to forced conceptions and far-fetched images.

He wrote indeed with a double intention, which ſupplied him with ſome variety; for his buſineſs was to praiſe the Queen for the favours which he had received, and to complain to her of the delay of thoſe which ſhe had promiſed: in ſome of his pieces, therefore, gratitude is predominant, and in ſome diſcontent; in ſome he repreſents himſelf as happy in her patronage, and in others as diſconſolate to find himſelf neglected.

Her promiſe, like other promiſes made to this unfortunate man, was never performed, though he took ſufficient care that it ſhould not be forgotten. The publication of his *Volunteer Laureat* procured him no other reward than a regular remittance of fifty pounds.

He was not ſo depreſſed by his diſappointments as to neglect any opportunity that was offered of advancing his intereſt. When the Princeſs Anne was married, he wrote a poem * upon her departure, only, as he declared, "becauſe it was expected from him," and he was not willing to bar his own proſpects by any appearance of neglect.

He never mentioned any advantage gained by this poem, or any regard that was paid to it; and therefore it is likely that it was conſidered at court as an act of duty to which he was obliged by his dependence, and which it was therefore not neceſſary to reward by any new favour; or perhaps the Queen really intended his advancement, and therefore thought it ſuperfluous to laviſh preſents upon a man whom ſhe intended to eſtabliſh for life.

About this time not only his hopes were in danger of being fruſtrated, but his penſion likewiſe of being obſtructed, by an accidental calumny. The writer of *The Daily Courant*, a paper then publiſhed under the direction of the miniſtry, charged him with a crime, which, though not very great in itſelf, would have been remarkably invidious in him, and might very juſtly have incenſed the Queen againſt him. He was accuſed, by name, of influencing elections againſt the court, by appearing at the head of a Tory mob; nor did the accuſer fail to aggravate his crime, by repreſenting it as the effect of the moſt attrocious ingratitude, and a kind of rebellion againſt the Queen, who had firſt preſerved him from an infamous death, and afterwards diſtinguiſhed him by her favour, and ſupported him by her charity. The charge, as it was open and confident, was likewiſe by good fortune very particular. The place of the tranſaction was mentioned, and the whole ſeries of the rioter's conduct related. This exactneſs made Mr. Savage's vindication eaſy; for he never had in his life ſeen the place which was declared to be the ſcene of his wickedneſs, nor ever had been preſent in any town when its repreſentatives were choſen. This anſwer he therefore made haſte to publiſh, with all the circumſtances neceſſary to make it

* *Printed in the late collection.*

credible; and very reaſonably demanded, that theaccuſation ſhould be retracted in the ſame paper, that he might no longer ſuffer the imputation of ſedition and ingratitude. This demand was likewiſe preſſed by him in a private letter to the author of the paper, who, either truſting to the protection of thoſe whoſe defence he had undertaken, or having entertained ſome perſonal malice againſt Mr. Savage, or fearing, leſt, by retracting ſo confident an aſſertion, he ſhould impair the credit of his paper, refuſed to give him that ſatisfaction.

Mr. ſavage therefore thought it neceſſary, to his own vindication, to proſecute him in the King's Bench; but as he did not find any ill effects from the accuſation, having ſufficiently cleared his innocence, he thought any farther procedure would have the appearance of revenge; and therefore willingly dropped it.

He ſaw ſoon afterwards a proceſs commenced in the ſame court againſt himſelf, on an information in which he was accuſed of writing and publiſhing an obſcene pamphlet.

It was always Mr. Savage's deſire to be diſtinguiſhed; and, when any controverſy became popular, he never wanted ſome reaſon for engaging in it with great ardour, and appearing at the head of the party which he had choſen. As he was never celebrated for his prudence, he had no ſooner taken his ſide, and informed himſelf of the chief topics of the diſpute, than he took all opportunities of aſſerting and propagating his principles, without much regard to his own intereſt, or any other viſible deſign than that of drawing upon himſelf the attention of mankind.

The diſpute between the biſhop of London and the chancellor is well known to have been for ſome time the chief topic of political converſation; and therefore Mr. Savage, in purſuance of his character, endeavoured to become conſpicuous among the controvertiſts with which every coffeehouſe was filled on that occaſion. He was an indefatigable oppoſer of all the claims of eccleſiaſtical power, though he did not know on what they were founded; and was therefore no friend to the Biſhop of London. But he had another reaſon for appearing as a warm advocate for Dr. Rundle; for he was the friend of Mr. Foſter and Mr. Thompſon, who were the friends of Mr. Savage.

Thus remote was his intereſt in the queſtion, which however, as he imagined, concerned him ſo nearly, that it was not ſufficient to harangue and diſpute, but neceſſary likewiſe to write upon it.

He therefore engaged with great ardour in a new poem, called by him, *The progress of a Divine;* in which he conducts a profligate prieſt by all gradations of wickedneſs from a poor curacy in the country, to the higheſt preferments of the church; and deſcribes with that humour which was natural to him, and that knowledge which was extended to all the diverſities of human life, his behaviour in every ſtation; and inſinuates, that this prieſt, thus accompliſhed, found at laſt a patron in the Biſhop of London.

When he was aſked by one of his friends, on what pretence he could charge the biſhop with ſuch an action? he had no more to ſay, than that he had only inverted the accuſation, and that he thought it reaſonable to believe, that he who obſtructed the riſe of a good man without reaſon, would for bad reaſons promote the exaltation of a villain.

The clergy were univerſally provoked by this ſatire; and Savage, who, as was his conſtant practice, had ſet his name to his performance, was cenſured in *The Weekly Miscellany** with ſeverity, which he did not ſeem inclined to forget.

* *A ſhort ſatire was likewiſe publiſhed in the ſame paper, in which were the following lines:*

For cruel murder doom'd to hempen death,
Savage, by royal grace, prolong'd his breath.
Well might you think he ſpent his future years
In prayer, and faſting, and repentant tears.
—But, O vain hope!—the truly Savage cries,
"Prieſts, and their ſlaviſh doctrines, I deſpiſe,
"Shall I———
"Who, by free thinking to free action fir'd,
"In midnight brawls a deathleſs name acquir'd,
"Now ſtoop to learn of eccleſiaſtic men?—
"—No, arm'd with rhyme, at prieſts I'll take my aim,
"Though prudence bids me murder but their fame."

WEEKLY MISCELLANY.

An anſwer was publiſhed in The Gentleman's Magazine, *written by an unknown hand, from which the following lines are ſelected:*

Transform'd by thoughtleſs rage, and midnight wine,
From malace free, and puſh'd without deſign;

But a return of invective was not thought a ſufficient puniſhment. The Court of King's Bench was therefore moved againſt him, and he was obliged to return an anſwer to a charge of obſcenity. It was urged, in his defence, that obſcenity was criminal when it was intended to promote the practice of vice; but that Mr. Savage had only introduced obſcene ideas, with the view of expoſing them to deteſtation, and of amending the age, by ſhewing the deformity of wickedneſs. This plea was admitted; and Sir Philip Yorke, who then preſided in that court, diſmiſſed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savag's writings.

The proſecution, however, anſwered in ſome meaſure the purpoſe of thoſe by whom it was ſet on foot; for Mr. Savage was ſo far intimidated by it, that, when the edition of his poem was ſold, he did not venture to reprint it; ſo that it was in a ſhort time forgotten, or forgotten by all but thoſe whom it offended.

It is ſaid, that ſome endeavours were uſed to incenſe the Queen againſt him: but he found advocates to obviate at leaſt part of their effect; for though he was never advanced, he ſtill continued to receive his penſion.

In equal brawl if Savage lung'd a thruſt,
And brought the youth a victim to the duſt;
So ſtrong the hand of accident appears,
The royal hand from guilt and vengeance clears.
Inſtead of waſting "all thy future years,
"Savage, in prayer and vain repentant tears;"
Exert thy pen to mend a vicious age,
To curb the prieſt, and ſink his high-church rage;
To ſhew what frauds the holy veſtments hide,
The neſts of av'rice, luſt, and pedant pride;
Then change the ſcene, let merit brightly ſhine,
And round the patriot twiſt the wreath divine;
The heavenly guide deliver down to fame;
In well-tun'd lays tranſmit a Foſter's name;
Touch every paſſion with harmonious art,
Exalt the genius, and correct the heart.
Thus future times ſhall royal grace extol;
Thus poliſh'd lines thy preſent fame enrol.
——But grant——
——Maliciouſly that Savage plung'd the ſteel,
And made the youth its ſhining vengeance feel;
My ſoul abhors the act, the man deteſts,
But more the bigotry in prieſtly breaſts.

GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, May 1735.

This poem drew more infamy upon him than any incident of his life; and, as his conduct cannot be vindicated, it is proper to ſecure his memory from reproach, by informing thoſe whom he made his enemies, that he never intended to repeat the provocation; and that, though, whenever he thought he had any reaſon to complain of the clergy, he uſed to threaten them with a new edition of *The Progress of a Divine*, it was his calm and ſettled reſolution to ſuppreſs it for ever.

He once intended to have made a better reparation for the folly or injuſtice with which he might be charged, by writing another poem, called *The Progress of a Free-thinker*, whom he intended to lead through all the ſtages of vice and folly, to convert him from virtue to wickedneſs, and from religion to infidelity, by all the modiſh ſophiſtry uſed for that purpoſe; and at laſt to diſmiſs him by his own hand into the other world.

That he did not execute this deſign is a real loſs to mankind, for he was too well acquainted with all the ſcenes of debauchery to have failed in his repreſentations of them, and too zealous for virtue not to have repreſented them in ſuch a manner as ſhould expoſe them either to ridicule or deteſtation.

But this plan was, like others, formed and laid aſide, till the vigour of his imagination was ſpent, and the effervescence of invention had ſubſided; but ſoon gave way to ſome other deſign, which pleaſed by its novelty for a while, and then was neglected like the former.

He was ſtill in his uſual exigencies, having no certain ſupport but the penſion allowed him by the Queen, which, though it might have kept an exact œconomiſt from want, was very far from being ſufficient for Mr. Savage, who had never been accuſtomed to diſmiſs any of his appetites without the gratification which they ſolicited, and whom nothing but want of money withheld from partaking of every pleaſure that fell within his view.

His conduct with regard to his penſion was very particular. No ſooner had he changed the bill, than he vaniſhed from the ſight of all his acquaintances, and lay for ſome time out of the reach of all the enquiries that friendſhip or curioſity could make after him; at length he appeared again pennyleſs as before, but never informed even thoſe whom he ſeemed to regard moſt, where he had been, nor was his retreat ever diſcovered.

This was his conſtant practice during the whole time that he received the penſion from the Queen; he regularly diſappeared and returned. He indeed affirmed that he retired to ſtudy, and that the money ſupported him in ſolitude for many months; but his friends declared, that the ſhort time in which it was ſpent ſufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His politeneſs and his wit ſtill raiſed him friends, who were deſirous of ſetting him at length free from that indigence by which he had been hitherto oppreſſed; and therefore ſolicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour with ſo much earneſtneſs, that they obtained a promiſe of the next place that ſhould become vacant, not exceeding two hundred pounds a year. This promiſe was made with an uncommon declaration, "that it was not the promiſe of a miniſter to a petitioner, but of a friend to his friend."

Mr. Savage now concluded himſelf ſet at eaſe for ever, and, as he obſerves in a poem written on that incident of his life, truſted and was truſted; but ſoon found that his confidence was ill-grounded, and this friendly promiſe was not inviolable. He ſpent a long time in ſolicitations, and at laſt deſpaired and deſiſted.

He did not indeed deny that he had given the miniſter ſome reaſon to believe that he ſhould not ſtrengthen his own intereſt by advancing him, for he had taken care to diſtinguiſh himſelf in coffee-houſes as an advocate for the miniſtry of the laſt years of Queen Anne, and was always ready to juſtify the conduct, and exalt the character of Lord Bolinbroke, whom he mentions with great regard in an epiſtle upon authors, which he wrote about that time, but was too wiſe to publiſh, and of which only ſome fragments have appeared, inſerted by him in the *Magazine* after his retirement.

To deſpair was not, however, the character of Savage; when one patronage failed, he had recourſe to another. The prince was now extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of ſome writers whom Mr. Savage did not think ſuperior to himſelf, and therefore he reſolved to addreſs a poem to him.

For this purpoſe he made choice of a ſubject, which could regard only perſons of the higheſt rank and higheſt affluence, and which was therefore proper for a poem intended to procure the patronage of a prince; and having retired for ſome time to Richmond, that he might proſecute his de-

ſign in full tranquility, without the temptations of pleaſure, or the ſolicitations of creditors, by which his meditations were in equal danger of being diſconcerted, he produced a poem *On Public Spirit, with regard to Public Works.*

The plan of this poem is very extenſive, and compriſes a multitude of topics, each of which might furniſh matter ſufficient for a long performance, and of which ſome have already employed more eminent writers; but as he was perhaps not fully acquainted with the whole extent of his own deſign, and was writing to obtain a ſupply of wants too preſſing to admit of long or accurate enquiries, he paſſes negligently over many public works, which, even in his own opinion, deſerved to be more elaborately treated.

But though he may ſometimes diſappoint his reader by tranſient touches upon theſe ſubjects, which have often been conſidered, and therefore naturally raiſe expectations, he muſt be allowed amply to compenſate his omiſſions, by expatiating, in the concluſion of his work, upon a kind of beneficence not yet celebrated by any eminent poet, though it now appears more ſuſceptible of embelliſhments, more adapted to exalt the ideas, and affect the paſſions, than many of thoſe which have hitherto been thought moſt worthy of the ornaments of verſe. The ſettlement of colonies in uninhabited countries, the eſtabliſhment of thoſe in ſecurity, whoſe misfortunes have made their own country no longer pleaſing or ſafe, the acquiſition of property without injury to any, the appropriation of the waſte and luxuriant bounties of nature, and the enjoyment of thoſe gifts which heaven has ſcattered upon regions uncultivated and unoccupied, cannot be conſidered without giving riſe to a great number of pleaſing ideas and bewildering the imagination in delightful proſpects; and therefore, whatever ſpeculations they may produce in thoſe who have confined themſelves to political ſtudies, naturally fixed the attention, and excited the applauſe of a poet. The politician, when he conſiders men driven into other countries for ſhelter, and obliged to retire to foreſts and deſerts, and paſs their lives and fix their poſterity in the remoteſt corners of the world, to avoid thoſe hardſhips which they ſuffer or fear in their native place, may very properly enquire, why the legiſlature does not provide a remedy for theſe miſeries, rather than encourage an eſcape from them. He may conclude, that the flight of every honeſt man is a loſs to the

community; that thoſe who are unhappy without guilt ought to be relieved; and the life, which is overburthened by accidental calamities, ſet at eaſe by the care of the public; and that thoſe, who have by miſconduct forfeited their claim to favour, ought rather to be made uſeful to the ſociety which they have injured, than driven from it. But the poet is employed in a more pleaſing undertaking than that of propoſing laws, which, however juſt or expedient, will never be made, or endeavouring to reduce to rational ſchemes of government, ſocieties which were formed by chance, and are conducted by the private paſſions of thoſe who preſide in them. He guides the unhappy fugitive from want and perſecution, to plenty, quiet, and ſecurity, and ſeats him in ſcenes of peaceful ſolitude, and undiſturbed repoſe.

Savage has not forgotten, amidſt the pleaſing ſentiments which this proſpect of retirement ſuggeſted to him, to cenſure thoſe crimes which have been generally committed by the diſcoverers of new regions, and to expoſe the enormous wickedneſs of making war upon barbarous nations becauſe they cannot reſiſt, and of invading countries becauſe they are fruitful; of extending navigation only to propagate vice, and of viſiting diſtant lands only to lay them waſte. He has aſſerted the natural equality of mankind, and endeavoured to ſuppreſs that pride which inclines men to imagine that right is the conſequence of power.

His deſcription of the various miſeries which force men to ſeek for refuge in diſtant countries, affords another inſtance of his proficiency in the important and extenſive ſtudy of human life; and the tenderneſs with which he recounts them, another proof of his humanity and benevolence.

It is obſervable, that the cloſe of his poem diſcovers a change which experience had made in Mr. Savage's opinions. In a poem written by him in his youth, and publiſhed in his Miſcellanies, he declares his contempt of the contracted views and narrow proſpects of the middle ſtate of life, and declares his reſolution either to tower like the cedar, or be trampled like the ſhrub; but in this poem, though addreſſed to a prince, he mentions this ſtate of life as compriſing thoſe who ought moſt to attract reward, thoſe who merit moſt the confidence of power, and the familiarity of greatneſs; and, accidentally mentioning this paſſage

to one of his friends, declared, that in his opinion all the virtue of mankind was comprehended in that ſtate.

In deſcribing villas and gardens, he did not omit to condemn that abſurd cuſtom which prevails among the Engliſh, of permitting ſervants to receive money from ſtrangers for the entertainment that they receive, and therefore inſerted in this poem theſe lines:

> But what the flowering pride of gardens rare,
> However royal, or however fair,
> If gates, which to acceſs ſhould ſtill give way,
> Ope but, like Peter's paradiſe, for pay?
> If perquiſited varlets frequent ſtand,
> And each new walk muſt a new tax demand?
> What foreign eye but with contempt ſurveys?
> What Muſe ſhall from oblivion ſnatch their praiſe?

But before the publication of his performance he recollected, that the Queen allowed her garden and cave at Richmond to be ſhewn for money, and that ſhe ſo openly countenanced the practice, that ſhe had beſtowed the privilege of ſhewing them as a place of profit on a man, whoſe merit ſhe valued herſelf upon rewarding, though ſhe gave him only the liberty of diſgracing his country.

He therefore thought, with more prudence than was often exerted by him, that the publication of theſe lines might be officiouſly repreſented as an inſult upon the Queen, to whom he owed his life and his ſubſiſtence; and that the propriety of his obſervation would be no ſecurity againſt the cenſures which the unſeaſonableneſs of it might draw upon him; he therefore ſuppreſſed the paſſage in the firſt edition, but after the Queen's death thought the ſame caution no longer neceſſary, and reſtored it to the proper place.

The poem was therefore publiſhed without any political faults, and inſcribed to the Prince; but Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to preſent it to him, had no other method of attracting his obſervation than the publication of frequent advertiſements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occaſions.

This diſappointment he never mentioned without indignation, being by ſome means or other confident that the Prince was not ignorant of his addreſs to him; and inſinu-

ated, that, if any advances in popularity could have been made by diſtinguiſhing him, he had not written without notice, or without reward.

He was once inclined to have preſented his poem in perſon, and ſent to the printer for a copy with that deſign; but either his opinion changed, or his reſolution deſerted him, and he continued to reſent neglect without attempting to force himſelf into regard.

Nor was the public much more favourable than his patron, for only ſeventy-two were ſold, though the performance was much commended by ſome whoſe judgment in that kind of writing is generally allowed. But Savage eaſily reconciled himſelf to mankind without imputing any defect to his work, by obſerving that his poem was unluckily publiſhed two days after the prorogation of the parliament, and by conſequence at a time when all thoſe who could be expected to regard it were in the hurry of preparing for their departure, or engaged in taking leave of others upon their diſmiſſion from public affairs.

It muſt be however allowed, in juſtification of the public that this performance is not the moſt excellent of Mr. Savage's works; and that, though it cannot be denied to contain many ſtriking ſentiments, majeſtic lines, and juſt obſervations, it is in general not ſufficiently poliſhed in the language, or enlivened in the imagery, or digeſted in the plan.

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which was ſuch as very few could have ſupported with equal patience; but to which it muſt likewiſe be confeſſed, that few would have been expoſed who received punctually fifty pounds a year a ſalary which, though by no means equal to the demands of vanity and luxury, is yet ſufficient to ſupport families above want, and was undoubtedly more than the neceſſities of life require.

But no ſooner had he received his penſion, than he withdrew to his darling privacy, from which he returned in a ſhort time to his former diſtreſs, and for ſome part of the year generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintances from which the meanneſs of his dreſs often excluded him, when the politeneſs and variety of his converſation would have been thought a ſufficient recompence for his entertainment.

He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and paſſed the night ſometimes in mean houſes, which are ſet open at night to any caſual wanderers, ſometimes in cellars, among the riot and filth of the moſt profligate of the rabble; and ſometimes, when he had not money to ſupport even the expences of theſe receptacles, walked about the ſtreets till he was weary, and lay down in the ſummer upon a bulk, or in the winter, with his aſſociates in poverty, among the aſhes of a glaſs-houſe.

In this manner were paſſed thoſe days and thoſe nights which nature had enabled him to have employed in elevated ſpeculations, uſeful ſtudies, or pleaſing converſation. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glaſs-houſe among thieves and beggars, was to be found the Author of *The Wanderer*, the man of exalted ſentiments, extenſive views, and curious obſervations; the man whoſe remarks on life might have aſſiſted the ſtateſman, whoſe ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moraliſt, whoſe eloquence might have influenced ſenates, and whoſe delicacy might have poliſhed courts.

It cannot but be imagined that ſuch neceſſities might ſometimes force him upon diſreputable practices: and it is probable thot theſe lines in *The Wanderer* were occaſioned by his reflections on his own conduct:

> Though miſery leads to happineſs, and truth,
> Unequal to the load, this languid youth
> (O, let none cenſure, if, untried by grief,
> If, amidſt woe, untempted by relief,)
> He ſtoop'd reluctant to low arts of ſhame,
> Which then, ev'n then he ſcorn'd, and bluſh'd to name.

Whoever was acquainted with him was certain to be ſolicited for ſmall ſums, which the frequency of the requeſt made in time conſiderable, and he was therefore quickly ſhunned by thoſe who were become familiar enough to be truſted with his neceſſities; but his rambling manner of life, and conſtant appearance at houſes of public reſort, always procured him a new ſucceſſion of friends, whoſe kindneſs had not been exhauſted by repeated requeſts; ſo that he was ſeldom abſolutely without reſources, but had in his utmoſt exigencies this comfort, that he always imagined himſelf ſure of ſpeedy relief.

It was obſerved, that he always aſked favours of this kind without the leaſt ſubmiſſion or apparent conſciouſneſs

of dependence, and that he did not ſeem to look upon a compliance with his requeſt as an obligation that deſerved any acknowledgments; but a refuſal was reſented by him as an affront, or complained of as an injury; nor did he readily reconcile himſelf to thoſe who either denied to lend or gave him afterwards any intimation that they expected to be repaid.

He was ſometimes ſo far compaſſionated by thoſe who knew both his merit and diſtreſſes, that they received him into their families, but they ſoon diſcovered him to be a very incommodious inmate; for, being always accuſtomed to an irregular manner of life, he could not confine himſelf to any ſtated hours, or pay any regard to the rules of a family, but would prolong his converſation till midnight, without conſidering that buſineſs might require his friend's application in the morning; and, when he had perſuaded himſelf to retire to bed, was not, without equal difficulty, called up to dinner; it was therefore impoſſible to pay him any diſtinction without the entire ſubverſion of all œconomy, a kind of eſtabliſhment which, wherever he went, he always appeared ambitious to overthrow.

It muſt therefore be acknowledged, in juſtification of mankind, that it was not always by the negligence or coldneſs of his friends that Savage was diſtreſſed, but becauſe it was in reality very difficult to preſerve him long in a ſtate of eaſe. To ſupply him with money was a hopeleſs attempt; for no ſooner did he ſee himſelf maſter of a ſum ſufficient to ſet him free from care for a day, than he became profuſe and luxurious. When once he had entered a tavern, or engaged in a ſcheme of pleaſure, he never retired till want of money obliged him to ſome new expedient. If he was entertained in a family, nothing was any longer to be regarded there but amuſements and jollity; wherever Savage entered, he immediately expected that order and buſineſs ſhould fly before him, that all ſhould thenceforward be left to hazard, and that no dull principle of domeſtic management ſhould be oppoſed to his inclination, or intrude upon his gaiety.

His diſtreſſes, however afflictive, never dejected him; in his loweſt ſtate he wanted not ſpirit to aſſert the natural dignity of wit, and was always ready to repreſs that inſolence which ſuperiority of fortune incited, and to trample on that reputation which roſe upon any other baſis than that of merit: he never admitted any groſs familiarities,

or ſubmitted to be treated otherwiſe than as an equal. Once, when he was without lodging, meat, or clothes, one of his friends, a man not indeed remarkable for moderation in his proſperity left a meſſage, that he deſired to ſee him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to aſſiſt him; but was very much diſguſted that he ſhould preſume to preſcribe the hour of his attendance, and, I believe, refuſed to viſit him, and rejected his kindneſs.

The ſame invincible temper, whether firmneſs or obſtinacy, appeared in his conduct to the Lord Tyrconnel, from whom he very frequently demanded, that the allowance which was once paid him ſhould be reſtored; but with whom he never appeared to entertain for a moment the thought of ſoliciting a reconciliation, and whom he treated at once with all the haughtineſs of ſuperiority, and all the bitterneſs of reſentment. He wrote to him, not in a ſtyle of ſupplication or reſpect, but of reproach, menace, and contempt; and appeared determined, if he ever regained his allowance, to hold it only by the right of conqueſt.

As many more can diſcover, that a man is richer than that he is wiſer than themſelves, ſuperiority of underſtanding is not ſo readily acknowledged as that of fortune; nor is it that haughtineſs, which the conſciouſneſs of great abilities incites, borne with the ſame ſubmiſſion as the tyranny of affluence; and therefore Savage, by aſſerting his claim to deference and regard, and by treating thoſe with contempt whom better fortune animated to rebel againſt him, did not fail to raiſe a great number of enemies in the different claſſes of mankind. Thoſe who thought themſelves raiſed above him by advantages of riches, hated him becauſe they found no protection from the petulance of his wit. Thoſe who were eſteemed for their writings feared him as a critic, and maligned him as a rival, and almoſt all the ſmaller wits were his profeſſed enemies.

Among theſe Mr. Miller ſo far indulged his reſentment as to introduce him in a farce, and direct him to be perſonated on the ſtage, in a dreſs like that which he then wore; a mean inſult, which only inſinuated that Savage had but one coat, and which was therefore deſpiſed by him rather than reſented; for though he wrote a lampoon againſt Miller, he never printed it: and as no other perſon ought to proſecute that revenge from which the perſon who was injured deſiſted, I ſhall not preſerve what Mr. Savage ſup-

preſſed: of which the publication would, indeed, have been a puniſhment too ſevere for ſo impotent an aſſault.

The great hardſhips of poverty were to Savage not the want of lodging or of food, but the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him. He complained, that as his affairs grew deſperate, he found his reputation for capacity viſibly decline; that his opinion in queſtions of criticiſm was no longer regarded, when his coat was out of faſhion; and that thoſe who, in the interval of his proſperity, were always encouraging him to great undertakings by encomiums on his genius and aſſurances of ſucceſs, now received any mention of his deſigns with coldneſs, thought that the ſubjects on which he propoſed to write were very difficult, and were ready to inform him, that the event of a poem was uncertain, that an author ought to employ much time in the conſideration of his plan, and not preſume to ſit down to write in confidence of a few curſory ideas, and a ſuperficial knowledge; difficulties were ſtarted on all ſides, and he was no longer qualified for any performance, but *The Volunteer Laureat.*

Yet even this kind of contempt never depreſſed him; for he always preſerved a ſteady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach which he ſhould at any time earneſtly endeavour to attain. He formed ſchemes of the ſame kind with regard to knowledge and to fortune, and flattered himſelf with advances to be made in ſcience, as with riches, to be enjoyed in ſome diſtant period of his life. For the acquiſition of knowledge he was indeed far better qualified than for that of riches; for he was naturally inquiſitive and deſirous of the converſation of thoſe from whom any information was to be obtained, but by no means ſolicitous to improve thoſe opportunities that were ſometimes offered of raiſing his fortune; and he was remarkable retentive of his ideas, which when once he was in the poſſeſſion of them, rarely forſook him; a quality which could never be communicated to his money.

While he was thus wearing out his life in expectation that the Queen would ſometime recollect her promiſe, he had recourſe to the uſual practice of writers, and publiſhed propoſals for printing his works by ſubſcription, to which he was encouraged by the ſucceſs of many who had not a better right to the favour of the public; but, whatever was the reaſon, he did not find the world equally inclined to

favour him; and he obſerved with ſome diſcontent, that, though he offered his works at half a guinea, he was able to procure but a ſmall number in compariſon with thoſe who ſubſcribed twice as much to Duck.

Nor was it without indignation that he ſaw his propoſals neglected by the Queen, who patroniſed Mr. Duck's with uncommon ardour, and incited a competition among thoſe who attended the court, who ſhould moſt promote his intereſt, and who ſhould firſt offer a ſubſcription. This was a diſtinction to which Mr. Savage made no ſcruple of aſſerting that his birth, his misfortunes, and genius, gave him a fairer title, than could be pleaded by him on whom it was conferred.

Savage's applications were however not univerſally unſucceſsful; for ſome of the nobility countenanced his deſign, encouraged his propoſals, and ſubſcribed with great liberality. He related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that, upon receiving his propoſals, he ſent him ten guineas.

But the money which his ſubſcriptions afforded him was not leſs volatile than that which he received from his other ſchemes; whenever a ſubſcription was paid him, he went to a tavern; and, as money ſo collected is neceſſarily received in ſmall ſums, he never was able to ſend his poems to the preſs, but for many years continued his ſolicitation, and ſquandered whatever he obtained.

This project of printing his works was frequently revived; and, as his propoſals grew obſolete, new ones were printed with freſher dates. To form ſchemes for the publication was one of his favourite amuſements; nor was he ever more at eaſe than when, with any friend who readily fell in with his ſchemes, he was adjuſting the print, forming the advertiſements, and regulating the diſperſion of his new edition, which he really intended ſome time to publiſh, and which, as long as experience had ſhewn him the impoſſibility of printing the volume together, he at laſt determined to divide into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the firſt might ſupply the expences of the next.

Thus he ſpent his time in mean expedients and tormenting ſuſpence, living for the greateſt part in the fear of proſecutions from his creditors, and conſequently ſkulking in obſcure parts of the town, of which he was no ſtranger to the remoteſt corners. But wherever he came, his addreſs ſecured him friends, whom his neceſſities ſoon alienated; ſo that he had perhaps a more numerous acquaintance than

any man ever before attained, there being ſcarcely any perſon eminent on any account to whom he was not known, or whoſe character he was not in ſome degree able to delineate.

To the acquiſition of this extenſive acquaintance every circumſtance of life contributed. He excelled in the arts of converſation, and therefore willingly practiſed them: He had ſeldom any home, or even lodging in which he could be private; and therefore was driven into public-houſes for the common conveniences of life and ſupports of nature. He was always ready to comply with every invitation, having no employment to withold him, and often no money to provide for himſelf; and by dining with one company, he never failed of obtaining an introduction into another.

Thus diſſipated was his life, and thus caſual his ſubſiſtance; yet did not the diſtraction of his views hinder him from reflection, nor the uncertainty of his condition depreſs his gaiety. When he had wandered about without any fortunate adventure by which he was led into a tavern, he ſometimes retired into the fields, and was able to employ his mind in ſtudy, or amuſe it with pleaſing imaginations; and ſeldom appeared to be melancholy, but when ſome ſudden misfortune had juſt fallen upon him, and even then in a few moments he would diſentangle himſelf from his perplexity, adopt the ſubject of converſation, and apply his mind wholly to the objects that others preſented to it.

This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet imbittered, in 1738, with new calamities. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the proſpects of preferment with which he ſo long entertained his imagination; and as Sir Robert Walpole had before given him reaſon to believe that he never intended the performance of his promiſe, he was now abandoned again to fortune.

He was however, at that time, ſupported by a friend; and as it was not his cuſtom to look out for diſtant calamities, or to feel any other pain than that which forced itſelf upon his ſenſes, he was not much afflicted at his loſs, and perhaps comforted himſelf that his penſion would be now continued without the annual tribute of a panegric.

Another expectation contributed likewiſe to ſupport him: he had taken a reſolution to write a ſecond tragedy upon the ſtory of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he preſerved a few lines of his former play, but made a total alteration

of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters; ſo that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former.

Many of his friends blamed him for not making choice of another ſubject; but, in vindication of himſelf, he aſſerted, that it was not eaſy to find a better; and that he thought it his intereſt to extinguiſh the memory of the firſt tragedy, which he could only do by writing one leſs defective upon the ſame ſtory; by which he ſhould entirely defeat the artifice of the bookſellers, who, after the death of any author of reputation, are always induſtrious to ſwell his works, by uniting his worſt productions with his beſt.

In the execution of this ſcheme, however, he proceeded but ſlowly, and probably only employed himſef upon it when he could find no other amuſement; but he pleaſed himſelf with counting the profits, and perhaps imagined, that the theatrical reputation which he was about to acquire, would be equivalent to all that he had loſt by the death of his patroneſs.

He did not, in confidence of his approaching riches, neglect the meaſures proper to ſecure the continuance of his penſion, though ſome of his favourers thought him culpable for omitting to write on her death; but on her birth-day next year, he gave a proof of the ſolidity of his judgment, and the power of his genius. He knew that the track of elegy had been ſo long beaten, that it was impoſſible to travel in it without treading in the footſteps of thoſe who had gone before him; and that therefore it was neceſſary, that he might diſtinguiſh himſelf from the herd of encomiaſts, to find out ſome new walk of funeral panegric.

This difficult taſk he performed in ſuch a manner, that his poem may be juſty ranked among the beſt pieces that the death of princes has produced. By transferring the mention of her death to her birth-day, he has formed a happy combination of topics, which any other man would have thought it very difficult to connect in one view, but which he has united in ſuch a manner, that the relation between them appears natural; and it may be juſtly ſaid, that what no other man would have thought on, it now appears ſcarcely poſſible for any man to miſs.

The beauty of this peculiar combination of images is ſo maſterly, that it is ſufficient to ſet this poem above cenſure; and therefore it is not neceſſary to mention many o-

ther delicate touches which may be found in it, and which would deſervedly be admired in any other performance.

To theſe proofs of his genius may be added, from the ſame poem, an inſtance of his prudence, an excellence for which he was not ſo often diſtinguiſhed; he does not forget to remind the King, in the moſt delicate and artful manner, of continuing his penſion

With regard to the ſucceſs of this addreſs he was for ſome time in ſuſpence, but was in no great degree ſolicitous about it; and continued his labour upon his new tragedy with great tranquillity, till the friend who had for a conſiderable time ſupported him, removing his family to another place, took occaſion to diſmiſs him. It then became neceſſary to enquire more diligently what was determined in his affair, having reaſon to ſuſpect that no great favour was intended him, becauſe he had not received his penſion at the uſual time.

It is ſaid, that he did not take thoſe methods of retrieving his intereſt, which were moſt likely to ſucceed; and ſome of thoſe who were employed in the Exchequer, cautioned him againſt too much violence in his proceedings; but Mr. Savage, who ſeldom regulated his conduct by the advice of others, gave way to his paſſion, and demanded of Sir Robert Walpole, at his levee, the reaſon of the diſtinction that was made between him and the other penſioners of the Queen, with a degree of roughneſs which perhaps determined him to withdraw what had been only delayed.

Whatever was the crime he was accuſed or ſuſpected, and whatever influence was employed againſt him, he received ſoon after an account that took from him all hopes of regaining his penſion; and he had now no proſpect of ſubſiſtence but from his play, and he knew no way of living for the time required to finiſh it

So peculiar were the misfortunes of this man, deprived of an eſtate and title by a particular law, expoſed and abandoned by a mother, defrauded by a mother of a fortune which his father had alloted him, he entered the world without a friend; and though his abilities forced themſelves into eſteem and reputation, he was never able to obtain any real advantage, and whatever proſpects aroſe were always intercepted as he began to approach them. The King's intentions in his favour were fruſtrated; his dedication to the Prince, whoſe generoſity on every other occa-

ſion was eminent, produced him no reward; Sir Robert Walpole, who valued himſelf upon keeping his promiſe to others, broke it to him without regret; and the bounty of the Queen was, after her death, withdrawn from him, and from him only.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore, not only with decency, but with cheerfulneſs; nor was his gaiety clouded even by his laſt diſappointments, though he was in a ſhort time reduced to the loweſt degree of diſtreſs, and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another inſtance of the inſurmountable obſtinacy of his ſpirit: his clothes were worn out; and he received notice, that at a coffee-houſe ſome clothes and linen were left for him: the perſon who ſent them did not, I believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might ſpare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit; but though the offer was ſo far generous, it was made with ſome neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage ſo much reſented, that he refuſed the preſent, and declined to enter the houſe till the clothes that had been deſigned for him were taken away.

His diſtreſs was now publickly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert ſome meaſures for his relief; and one of them wrote a letter to him, in which he expreſſed his concern "for the miſerable withdrawing of his penſion;" and gave him hopes, that in a ſhort time he ſhould find himſelf ſupplied with a competence, "without any dependence on thoſe little creatures which we are pleaſed to call the Great."

The ſcheme propoſed for this happy and independent ſubſiſtence, was, that he ſhould retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raiſed by a ſubſcription, on which he was to live privately in a cheap place, without aſpiring any more to affluence, or having any further care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from thoſe of his friends; for they propoſed that he ſhould continue an exile from London for ever, and ſpend all the remaining part of his life at Swanſea; but he deſigned only to take the opportunity, which their ſcheme offered him, of retreating for a ſhort time, that he might prepare his play for the ſtage, and his other works for the preſs, and then to return to London to exhibit his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

With regard to his works, he propoſed very great improvements, which would have required much time, or great application; and when he had finiſhed them, he deſigned to do juſtice to his ſubſcribers, by publiſhing them according to his propoſals.

As he was ready to entertain himſelf with future pleaſures, he had planned out a ſcheme of life for the country, of which he had no knowledge but from paſtorals and ſongs. He imagined that he ſhould be tranſported to ſcenes of flowery felicity, like thoſe which one poet has reflected to another; and had projected a perpetual round of innocent pleaſures, of which he ſuſpected no interruption from pride, or ignorance, or brutality.

With theſe expectations he was ſo enchanted, that when he was once gently reproached by a friend for ſubmitting to live upon a ſubſcription, and adviſed rather by a reſolute exertion of his abilities to ſupport himſelf, he could not bear to debar himſelf from the happineſs which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or loſe the opportunity of liſtening, without intermiſſion, to the melody of the nightingale, which he believed was to be heard from every bramble, and which he did not fail to mention as a very important part of the happineſs of a country life.

While this ſcheme was ripening, his friends directed him to take a lodging in the liberties of the Fleet, that he might be ſecure from his creditors and ſent him every Monday a guinea, which he commonly ſpent before the next morning, and truſted, after his uſual manner, the remaining part of the week to the bounty of fortune.

He now began very ſenſibly to feel the miſeries of dependence. Thoſe by whom he was to be ſupported, began to preſcribe to him with an air of authority, which he knew not how decently to reſent, nor patiently to bear; and he ſoon diſcovered, from the conduct of moſt of his ſubſcribers, that he was yet in the hands of "little creatures."

Of the inſolence that he was obliged to ſuffer he gave many inſtances, of which none appeared to raiſe his indignation to a greater height, than the method which was taken of furniſhing him clothes. Inſtead of conſulting him, and allowing him to ſend a taylor his orders for what they thought proper to allow him, they propoſed to ſend for a taylor to take his meaſure, and then to conſult how they ſhould equip him.

This treatment was not very delicate, nor was it ſuch as Savage's humanity would have ſuggeſted to him on a like occaſion; but it had ſcarcely deſerved mention, had it not, by affecting him in an uncommon degree, ſhewn the peculiarity of his character. Upon hearing the deſign that was formed, he came to the lodging of a friend with the moſt violent agonies of rage; and being aſked what it could be that gave him ſuch diſturbance, he replied with the utmoſt vehemence of indignation, "That they had ſent for a taylor to meaſure him."

How the affair ended was never enquired, for fear of renewing his uneaſineſs. It is probable, that, upon recollection, he ſubmitted with a good grace to what he could not avoid, and that he diſcovered no reſentment where he had no power.

He was, however, not humbled to implicit and univerſal compliance; for when the gentleman, who had firſt informed him of the deſign to ſupport him by a ſubſcription, attempted to procure a reconciliation with the Lord Tyrconnel, he could by no means be prevailed upon to comply with the meaſures that were propoſed.

A letter was written for him * to Sir William Lemon, to prevail upon him to interpoſe his good offices with Lord Tyrconnel, in which he ſolicited Sir William's aſſiſtance, "for a man who really needed it as much as any man could well do;" and informed him, that he was retiring "for ever to a place where he ſhould no more trouble his relations, friends, or enemies;" he confeſſed, that his paſſion had betrayed him to ſome conduct with regard to Lord Tyrconnel, for which he could not but heartily aſk his pardon; and as he imagined Lord Tyrconnel's paſſion might be yet ſo high, that he would not "receive a letter from him," begged that Sir William would endeavour to ſoften him; and expreſſed his hopes that he would comply with his requeſt, and that "ſo ſmall a relation would not harden his heart againſt him."

That any man ſhould preſume to dictate a letter to him was not very agreeable to Mr. Savage; and therefore he was, before he had opened it, not much inclined to approve it. But when he read it, he found it contained ſentiments entirely oppoſite to his own, and, as he aſſerted, to the truth; and therefore inſtead of copying it, wrote his friend a letter full of maſculine reſentment and warm expoſtulations.

* *By Mr. Pope.*

He very juſtly obſerved, that the ſtyle was too ſupplicatory and the repreſentation too abject, and that he ought at leaſt to have made him complain with "the dignity of a gentleman in diſtreſs." He declared that he would not write the paragraph in which he was to aſk Lord Tyrconnel's pardon; for, "he deſpiſed his pardon, and therefore could not heartily, and would not hypocritically, aſk it." He remarked, that his friend made an unſeaſonable diſtinction between himſelf and him; for, ſays he, when you mention men of high rank "in your own character," they are "thoſe little creatures whom we are pleaſed to call the great;" but when you addreſs them "in mine," no ſervility is ſufficiently humble. He then with great propriety explained the ill conſequences which might be expected from ſuch a letter, which his relations would print in their own defence and which would forever be produced as a full anſwer to all that he ſhould alledge againſt them; for he always intended to publiſh a minute account of the treatment which he had received. It is to be remembered, to the honour of the gentleman by whom this letter was drawn up, that he yielded to Mr. Savage's reaſons, and agreed that it ought to be ſuppreſſed.

After many alterations and delays, a ſubſcription was at length raiſed, which did not amount to fifty pounds a year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman; ſuch was the generoſity of mankind, that what had been done by a player without ſolicitation, could not now be affected by application and intereſt; and Savage had a great number to court and to obey for a penſion leſs than that which Mrs. Oldfield paid him without exacting any ſervilities.

Mr. Savage however was ſatisfied, and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance, though ſcanty, would be more than ſufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid œconomiſt, and to live according to the exacteſt rules of frugality; for nothing was in his opinion more contemptible than a man, who, when he knew his income, exceeded it; and yet he confeſſed, that inſtances of ſuch folly were too common, and lamented that ſome men were not to be truſted with their own money.

Full of theſe ſalutary reſolutions, he left London in July 1739, having taken leave with great tenderneſs of his friends, and parted from the author of this narrative with tears in his eyes. He was furniſhed with fifteen guineas,

and informed, that they would be ſufficient, not only for the expence of his journey, but for his ſupport in Wales for ſome time; and that there remained but little more of the firſt collection. He promiſed a ſtrict adherence to his maxims of parſimony, and went away in the ſtage coach; nor did his friends expect to hear from him, till he informed them of his arrival in Swanſea.

But when they leaſt expected, arrived a letter dated the fourteenth day after his departure, in which he ſent them word, that he was yet upon the road, and without money; and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then ſent him the money that was in their hands, with which he was enabled to reach Briſtol, from whence he was to go to Swanſea by water.

At Briſtol he found an embargo laid upon the ſhipping, ſo that he could not immediately obtain a paſſage; and being therefore obliged to ſtay there ſome time, he, with his uſual felicity, ingratiated himſelf with many of the principle inhabitants, was invited to their houſes, diſtinguiſhed at their public feaſts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore eaſily engaged his affection.

He began very early after his retirement to complain of the conduct of his friends in London, and irritated many of them ſo much by his letters, that they withdrew, however honourably, their contributions; and it is believed, that little more was paid him than the twenty pounds a year, which were allowed him by the gentleman who propoſed the ſubſcription.

After ſome ſtay at Briſtol he retired to Swanſea, the place originally propoſed for his reſidence, where he lived about a year, very much diſſatisfied with the diminution of his ſalary; but contracted, as in other places, acquaintance with thoſe who were moſt diſtinguiſhed in that country, among whom he has celebrated Mr. Powel and Mrs. Jones, by ſome verſes which he inſerted in *The Gentleman's Magazine.**

Here he completed his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London, and was deſirous of coming to town to bring it upon the ſtage. This deſign was very warmly oppoſed, and he was adviſed by his chief benefactor to put it into the hands of Mr. Thomſon and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the ſtage, and allow his

* *Reprinted in the late collection.*

friends to receive the profits out of which an annual penſion ſhould be paid him.

This propoſal he rejected with the utmoſt contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgment of thoſe, to whom he was required to ſubmit, was ſuperior to his own. He was now determined, as he expreſſed it, to be "no longer kept in leading-ſtrings," and had no elevated idea of "his bounty who propoſed to penſion him out of the profits of his own labours."

He attempted, in Wales, to promote a ſubſcription for his works, and had once hopes of ſucceſs; but in a ſhort time afterwards formed a reſolution of leaving that part of the country, to which he thought it not reaſonable to be confined for the gratification of thoſe, who, having promiſed him a liberal income, had no ſooner baniſhed him to a remote corner than they reduced his allowance to a ſalary ſcarcely equal to the neceſſities of life.

His reſentment of this treatment, which, in his own opinion at leaſt, he had not deſerved, was ſuch, that he broke off all correſpondence with moſt of his contributors, and appeared to conſider them as perſecutors and oppreſſors; and in the latter part of his life declared, that their conduct towards him, ſince his departure from London, "had been perfidiouſneſs improving on perfidiouſneſs, and inhumanity on inhumanity."

It is not to be ſuppoſed, that the neceſſities of Mr. Savage did not ſometimes incite him to ſatirical exaggerations of the behaviour of thoſe by whom he thought himſelf reduced to them. But it muſt be granted, that the diminution of his allowance was a great hardſhip, and that thoſe who withdrew their ſubſcription from a man, who, upon the faith of their promiſe, had gone into a kind of baniſhment, and abandoned all thoſe by whom he had been before relieved in his diſtreſſes, will find it no eaſy taſk to vindicate their conduct.

It may be alledged, and perhaps juſtly, that he was petulant and contemptuous; that he more frequently reproached his ſubſcribers for not giving him more, than thanked them for what he received; but it is to be remembered, that his conduct, and this is the worſt charge that can be drawn up againſt him, did them no real injury; and that therefore it ought rather to have been pitied than reſented; at leaſt, the reſentment it might provoke, ought to have been generous; and epithets which his conduct will hardly deſerve that

ſtarves the man whom he has perſuaded to put himſelf in his power.

It might have been reaſonably demanded by Savage, that they ſhould, before they had taken away what they promiſed, have replaced him in his former ſtate, that they ſhould have taken no advantages from the ſituation to which the appearance of their kindneſs had reduced him, and that he ſhould have been recalled to London before he was abandoned. He might juſtly repreſent, that he ought to have been conſidered as a lion in the toils, and demanded to be releaſed before the dogs ſhould be looſed upon him.

He endeavoured, indeed, to releaſe himſelf, and, with an intent to return to London, went to Briſtol, where a repetition of the kindneſs which he had formerly found invited him to ſtay. He was not only carreſſed and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy, if he had immediately departed for London; but his negligence did not ſuffer him to conſider that ſuch proofs of kindneſs were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was in a great degree the effect of novelty, and might, probably, be every day leſs; and therefore he took no care to improve the happy time, but was encouraged by one favour to hope for another, till at length generoſity was exhauſted, and officiouſneſs wearied.

Another part of his miſconduct was the practic of prolonging his viſits to unſeaſonable hours, and diſconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error in a place of commerce which all the charms of his converſation could not compenſate; for what trader would purchaſe ſuch airy ſatisfaction by the loſs of ſolid gain, which muſt be the conſequence of midnight merriment, as thoſe hours which were gained at night were generally loſt in the morning?

Thus Mr. Savage, after the curioſity of the inhabitants was gratified, found the number of his friends daily decreaſing, perhaps without ſuſpecting for what reaſon their conduct was altered; for he ſtill continued to harraſs, with his nocturnal intruſions, thoſe that yet countenanced him, and admitted him to their houſes.

But he did not ſpend all the time of his reſidence at Briſtol, in viſits or at taverns, for he ſometimes returned to his ſtudies, and began ſeveral conſiderable deſigns. When

he felt an inclination to write, he always retired from the knowledge of his friends, and lay hid in an obſcure part of the ſuburbs, till he found himſelf again deſirous of company, to which it is likely that intervals of abſence made him more welcome.

He was always full of his deſign of returning to London, to bring his tragedy upon the ſtage; but, having neglected to depart, with the money that was raiſed for him, he could not afterwards procure a ſum ſufficient to defray the expences of his journey; nor perhaps would a freſh ſupply have had any other effect, than by putting immediate pleaſures in his power, to have driven the thoughts of his journey out of his mind.

While he was thus ſpending the day in contriving a ſcheme for the morrow, diſtreſs ſtole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His conduct had already wearied ſome of thoſe who were at firſt enamoured of his converſation; but he might, perhaps, ſtill have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal ſucceſs, had not the decay of his clothes made it no longer conſiſtent with their vanity to admit him to their tables, or to aſſociate with him in public places. He now began to find every man from home at whoſe houſe he called; and was therefore no longer able to procure the neceſſaries of life, but wandered about the town, ſlighted and neglected, in queſt of a dinner which he did not always obtain.

To complete his miſery he was purſued by the officers for ſmall debts which he had contracted; and was therefore obliged to withdraw from the ſmall number of friends from whom he had ſtill reaſon to hope for favours. His cuſtom was to lie in bed the greateſt part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmoſt privacy, and after having paid his viſit return again, before morning, to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obſcure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he ſuffered the utmoſt extremities of poverty, and often faſted ſo long that he was ſeized with faintneſs, and had loſt his appetite, not being able to bear the ſmell of meat, till the action of his ſtomach was reſtored by a cordial.

In this diſtreſs, he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himſelf a decent coat, and determined to go to London, but unhappily ſpent

his money at a favourite tavern. Thus was he again confined to Briſtol, where he was every day hunted by bailiffs. In this exigence he once more found a friend, who ſheltered him in his houſe, though at the uſual inconveniencies with which his company was attended; for he could neither be perſuaded to go to bed in the night, nor riſe in the day.

It is obſervable, that in theſe various ſcenes of miſery, he was always diſengaged and cheerful; he at ſometimes purſued his ſtudies, and at others continued or enlarged his epiſtolary correſpondence; nor was he ever ſo far dejected as to endeavour to procure an increaſe of his allowance, by any other methods than accuſations and reproaches.

He had now no longer any hopes of aſſiſtance from his friends at Briſtol, who as merchants, and by conſequence ſufficiently ſtudious of profit, cannot be ſuppoſed to have looked with much compaſſion on negligence and extravagance, or to think any excellence equivalent to a fault of ſuch conſequence as neglect of œconomy. It is natural to imagine, that many of thoſe who would have relieved his real wants, were diſcouraged from the exertion of their benevolence by obſervation of the uſe which was made of their favours, and conviction that relief would only be momentary, and that the ſame neceſſity would quickly return.

At laſt he quitted the houſe of his friend, and returned to his lodging at the inn, ſtill intending to ſet out in a few days for London; but on the 10th of January 1742-3, having been at ſupper with two of his friends, he was at his return to his lodgings arreſted for a debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffee-houſe, and conducted to the houſe of a ſheriff's officer. The account which he gives of this misfortune, in a letter to one of the gentlemen with whom he had ſupped, is too remarkable to be omitted

"It was not a little unfortunate for me, that I ſpent yeſterday's evening with you; becauſe the hour hindered me from entering on my new lodging; however, I have now got one, but ſuch an one as I believe nobody would chuſe.

"I was arreſted at the ſuit of Mrs. Read, juſt as I was going up ſtairs to bed, at Mr. Bowyer's; but taken in ſo private a manner, that I believe nobody at the White Lion is appriſed of it. Though I let the officers know the

ſtrength (or rather weakneſs) of my pocket, yet they treated me with the utmoſt civility; and even when they conducted me to confinement, it was in ſuch a manner, that I verily believe I could have eſcaped, which I would rather be ruined than have done, notwithſtanding the whole amount of my finances was but three pence half-penny.

"In the firſt place I muſt inſiſt, that you will induſtriouſly conceal this from Mrs. S——s, becauſe I would not have her goodnature ſuffer that pain, which, I know, ſhe would be apt to feel on this occaſion.

"Next, I conjure you, dear ſir, by all the ties of friendſhip, by no means to have one uneaſy thought on my account; but to have the ſame pleaſantry of countenance, and unruffled ſerenity of mind, which (God be praiſed!) I have in this, and have had in a much ſeverer calamity. Furthermore, I charge you, if you value my friendſhip as truly as I do yours, not to utter, or even harbour, the leaſt reſentment againſt Mrs. Read. I believe ſhe has ruined me, but I freely forgive her; and (though I will never more have any intimacy with her) I would, at a due diſtance, rather do her an act of good, than ill-will. Laſtly (pardon the expreſſion) I abſolutely command you not to offer me any pecuniary aſſiſtance, nor to attempt getting me any from any one of your friends. At another time, or on any other occaſion, you may, dear friend, be well aſſured, I would rather write to you in the ſubmiſſive ſtyle of a requeſt than that of a peremtory command.

"However, that my truly valuable friend may not think I am too proud to aſk a favour, let me entreat you to let me have your boy to attend me for this day, not only for the ſake of ſaving me the expence of porters, but for the delivery of ſome letters to people whoſe names I would not have known to ſtrangers.

"The civil treatment I have thus far met from thoſe whoſe priſoner I am, makes me thankful to the Almighty, that, though he has thought fit to viſit me (on my birth-night) with affliction, yet (ſuch is his great goodneſs!) my affliction is not without alleviating circumſtances. I murmur not; but am all reſignation to the Divine will. As to the world, I hope that I ſhall be indued by Heaven with that preſence of mind, that ſerene dignity in misfortune that conſtitutes the character of a true nobleman; a dignity far beyond that of coronets; a nobility ariſing from the juſt

principles of philoſophy, refined and exalted by thoſe of chriſtianity."—

He continued five days at the officer's, in hopes that he ſhould be able to procure bail, and avoid the neceſſity of going to priſon. The ſtate in which he paſſed his time, and the treatment which he received, are very juſtly expreſſed by him in a letter which he wrote to a friend: "The whole day," ſays he, "has been employed in various peoples' filling my head with their fooliſh chimerical ſyſtems, which has obliged me coolly (as far as nature will admit) to digeſt, and accommodate myſelf to every different perſon's way of thinking; hurried from one wild ſyſtem to another, till it has quite made a chaos of my imagination, and nothing done—promiſed—diſappointed—ordered to ſend, every hour, from one part of the town to the other."——

When his friends, who had hitherto careſſed and applauded, found that to give bail and pay the debt was the ſame, they all refuſed to preſerve him from a priſon at the expence of eight pounds; and therefore, after having been for ſome time at the officer's houſe, "at an immenſe expence," as he obſerves in his letter, he was at length removed to Newgate.

This expence he was enabled to ſupport by the generoſity of Mr. Naſh at Bath, who, upon receiving from him an account of his condition, immediately ſent him five guineas, and promiſed to promote his ſubſcription at Bath with all his intereſt.

By his removal to Newgate, he obtained at leaſt a freedom from ſuſpenſe, and reſt from the diſturbing viciſſitudes of hope and diſappointment; he now found that his friends were only companions, who were willing to ſhare his gaiety, but not to partake of his misfortunes; and therefore he no longer expected any aſſiſtance from them.

It muſt however be obſerved of one gentleman, that he offered to releaſe him by paying the debt; but that Mr. Savage would not conſent, I ſuppoſe becauſe he thought he had before been too burthenſome to him.

He was offered by ſome of his friends, that a collection ſhould be made for his enlargement; but he treated the propoſal," and declared "he ſhould again treat it, with diſdain. As to writing any mendicant letters, he had too high a ſpirit, and determined only to write to ſome miniſters of ſtate, to try to regain his penſion."

He continued to complain of thoſe that had ſent him into the country, and objected to them, that he had "loſt the profits of his play, which had been finiſhed three years;" and in another letter he declares his reſolution to publiſh a pamphlet, that the world might know how "he had been uſed."

This pamphlet was never written; for he in a very ſhort time recovered his uſual tranquility, and cheerfully applied himſelf to more inoffenſive ſtudies. He indeed, ſteadily declared, that he was promiſed a yearly allowance of fifty pounds, and never received half the ſum; but he ſeemed to reſign himſelf to that as well as to other misfortunes, and loſe the remembrance of it in his amuſements and employments.

The cheerfulneſs with which he bore his confinement, appears from the following letter, which he wrote, January 30th, to one of his friends in London:

"I now write to you from my confinement in Newgate, where I have been ever ſince Monday laſt was ſe'nnight, and where I enjoy myſelf with much more tranquillity than I have known for upwards of a twelve month paſt; having a room entirely to myſelf, and purſuing the amuſement of my poetical ſtudies, uninterrupted, and agreeable to my mind. I thank the Almighty, I am now all collected in myſelf; and though my perſon is in confinement, my mind can expiate on ample and uſeful ſubjects with all the freedom imaginable. I am now more converſant with the Nine than ever; and if, inſtead of a Newgate-bird, I may be allowed to be a bird of the Muſes, I aſſure you Sir, I ſing very freely in my cage; ſometimes indeed in the plaintive notes of the nightingale; but, at others, in the cheerful ſtrain of the lark."—

In another letter he obſerves, that he ranges from one ſubject to another without confining himſelf to any particular taſk; and that he was employed one week upon one attempt, and the next upon another.

Surely the fortitude of this man deſerves, at leaſt, to be mentioned with applauſe; and whatever faults may be imputed to him, the virtue of ſuffering well cannot be denied him. The two powers which, in the opinion of Epictetus, conſtituted a wiſe man, are thoſe of bearing and forbearing, which cannot indeed be affirmed to have been equally poſſeſſed by Savage; and indeed the want of one obliged him very frequently to practiſe the other.

He was treated by Mr. Dagg, the keeper of the prifon, with great humanity; was fupported by him at his own table without any certainty of recompence; had a room to himfelf, to which he could at any time retire from all diſturbance; was allowed to ſtand at the door of the priſon, and ſometimes taken out into the fields; ſo that he ſuffered fewer hardſhips in priſon than he had been accuſtomed to undergo in the greateſt part of his life.

The keeper did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made ſome overtures to the creditor for his releaſe, though without effect; and continued, during the whole time of his impriſonment, to treat him with the utmoſt tenderneſs and civility.

Virtue is undoubtedly moſt laudable in that ſtate which makes it moſt difficult; and therefore the humanity of a gaoler certainly deſerves this public atteſtation; and the man, whoſe heart has not been hardened by ſuch an employment, may be juſtly propoſed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inſcription was once engraved "to the honeſt toll-gatherer," leſs honours ought not to be paid "to the tender gaoler."

Mr. Savage very frequently received viſits, and ſometimes preſents, from his acquaintances; but they did not amount to a ſubſiſtence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generoſity of this keeper; but theſe favours, however they might endear to him the particular perſons from whom he received them, were very far from impreſſing upon his mind any advantageous ideas of the people of Briſtol, and therefore he thought he could not more properly employ himſelf in priſon, than in writing a poem called "London and Briſtol delineated."

When he had brought this poem to its preſent ſtate, which, without conſidering the chaſm, is not perfect, he wrote to London an account of his deſign, and informed his friend, that he was determined to print it with his name; but enjoined him not to communicate his intention to his Briſtol acquaintance. The gentleman, ſurpriſed at his reſolution, endeavoured to diſſuade him from publiſhing it, at leaſt from prefixing his name; and declared, that he could not reconcile the injunction of ſecrecy with his reſolution to own it at its firſt appearance. To this Mr. Savage returned an anſwer agreeable to his character in the following terms:

"I received yours this morning; and not without a little ſurpriſe at the contents. To anſwer a queſtion with a queſtion, you aſk me concerning London and Briſtol, Why will I add delineated? Why did Mr. Woolaſton add the ſame word to his RELIGION OF NATURE? I ſuppoſe that it was his will and pleaſure to add it in his caſe; and it is mine to do ſo in my own. You are pleaſed to tell me, that you underſtand not why ſecrecy is enjoined, and yet I intend to ſet my name to it. My anſwer is——I have my private reaſons, which I am not obliged to explain to any one. You doubt my friend Mr. S—— would not approve of it——And what is it to me whether he does or not? Do you imagine that Mr. S—— is to dictate to me? If any man who calls himſelf my friend ſhould aſſume ſuch an air, I would ſpurn at his friendſhip with contempt. You ſay I ſeem to think ſo by my not letting him know it—And ſuppoſe I do, what then? Perhaps I can give reaſons for that diſapprobation, very foreign from what you would imagine. You go on in ſaying, Suppoſe I ſhould not put my name to it—My anſwer is, that I will not ſuppoſe any ſuch thing, being determined to the contrary: neither, Sir, would I have you ſuppoſe, that I applied to you for want of another preſs: nor would I have you imagine, that I owe Mr. S—— obligations which I do not."

Such was his imprudence, and ſuch his obſtinate adherence to his own reſolutions, however abſurd. A priſoner! ſupported by charity! and, whatever inſults he might have received during the latter part of his ſtay in Briſtol, once careſſed, eſteemed, and preſented with a liberal collection, he could forget on a ſudden his danger and his obligations, to gratify the petulance of his wit, or the eagerneſs of his reſentment, and publiſh a ſatire, by which he might reaſonably expect that he ſhould alienate thoſe who then ſupported him, and provoke thoſe whom he could neither reſiſt nor eſcape.

This reſolution, from the execution of which it is probable that not only his death could have hindered him, is ſufficient to ſhew, how much he diſregarded all conſiderations that oppoſed his preſent paſſions, and how readily he hazarded all future advantages for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his predominant inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it; nor had oppoſition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence.

This performance was however laid aside, while he was employed in soliciting assistance from several great persons; and one interruption succeeding another, hindered him from supplying the chasm, and perhaps from retouching the other parts, which he can hardly be imagined to have finished in his own opinion; for it is very unequal, and some of the lines are rather inserted to rhyme to others, than to support or improve the sense; but the first and last parts are worked up with great spirit and elegance.

His time was spent in the prison for the most part in study, or in receiving visits; but sometimes he descended to lower amusements, and diverted himself in the kitchen with the conversation of the criminals; for it was not pleasing to him to be much without company; and though he was very capable of a judicious choice, he was often contented with the first that offered: for this he was sometimes reproved by his friends, who found him surrounded with felons; but the reproof was on that, as on other occasions, thrown away; he continued to gratify himself, and to set very little value on the opinion of others.

But here, as in every other scene of his life, he made use of such opportunities as occurred of benefiting those who were more miserable than himself, and was always ready to perform any office of humanity to his fellow-prisoners.

He had now ceased from corresponding with any of his subscribers except one, who yet continued to remit him the twenty pounds a year which he had promised him, and by whom it was expected that he would have been in a very short time enlarged, because he had directed the keeper to enquire after the state of his debts.

However, he took care to enter his name according to the forms of the court, that the creditor might be obliged to make him some allowance, if he was continued a prisoner, and when on that occasion he appeared in the hall was treated with very unusual respect.

But the resentment of the city was afterwards raised by some accounts that had been spread of the satire, and he was informed that some of the merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a prisoner at their own expence. This he treated as an empty menace; and perhaps might have hastened the publication, only to shew how much he was superior to their insults, had not all his schemes been suddenly destroyed.

When he had been six months in prison, he received from one of his friends *, in whose kindness he had the greatest confidence, and on whose assistance he chiefly depended, a letter, that contained a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in such terms as sudden resentment dictated. Henley, in one of his advertisements, had mentioned *Pope's treatment of Savage*. This was supposed by Pope to be the consequence of a complaint made by Savage to Henley, and was therefore mentioned by him with much resentment. Mr. Savage returned a very solemn protestation of his innocence, but however appeared much disturbed at the accusation. Some days afterwards he was seized with a pain in his back and side, which as it was not violent, was not suspected to be dangerous; but growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himself to his room, and a fever seized his spirits. The symptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any assistance. The last time that the keeper saw him was on July the 31st, 1743; when Savage seeing him at his bed-side, said, with an uncommon earnestness, "I have something to say to you, Sir;" but, after a pause, moved his hand in a melancholy manner; and, finding himself unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, said, "'Tis gone!" The keeper soon after left him; and the next morning he died. He was buried in the church-yard of St. Peter, at the expence of the keeper.

Such were the life and death of Richard Savage, a man equally distinguished by his virtues and vices; and at once remarkable for his weaknesses and abilities.

He was of a middle stature, of a thin habit of body, a long visage, coarse features, and melancholy aspect; of a grave and manly deportment, a solemn dignity of mein; but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, softened into an engaging easiness of manners. His walk was slow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was easily excited to smiles, but very seldom provoked to laughter.

His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active. His judgment was accurate, his apprehension quick, and his memory so tenacious, that he was frequently observed to know what he had learned from others in a short time, better than those by whom he was informed; and

* *Mr. Pope.*

could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumſtances, which few would have regarded at the preſent time, but which the quickneſs of his apprehenſion impreſſed upon him. He had the peculiar felicity, that his attention never deſerted him; he was preſent to every object, and regardful of the moſt trifling occurrences. He had the art of eſcaping from his own reflections, and accomodating himſelf to every new ſcene.

To this quality is to be imputed the extent of his knowledge, compared with the ſmall time which he ſpent in viſible endeavours to acquire it. He mingled in curſory converſation with the ſame ſteadineſs of attention as others apply to a lecture; and, amidſt the appearance of thoughtleſs gaiety, loſt no new idea that was ſtarted, nor any hint that could be improved. He had therefore made in coffee-houſes the ſame proficiency as others in their cloſets: and it is remarkable, that the writings of a man of little education and little reading have an air of learning ſcarcely to be found in any other performances, but which perhaps as often obſcures as embelliſhes them.

His judgment was eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment; and it is not without ſome ſatisfaction, that I can produce the ſuffrage of Savage in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain ſuch odious ideas as ſome, who perhaps had neither his judgment nor experience, have publiſhed, either in oſtentation of their ſagacity vindication of their crimes, or gratification of their malice.

His method of life particularly qualified him for converſation, of which he knew how to practiſe all the graces. He was never vehement or loud, but at once modeſt and eaſy, open and reſpectful; his language was vivacious and elegant, and equally happy upon grave or humourous ſubjects. He was generally cenſured for not knowing when to retire; but that was not the defect of his judgment, but of his fortune; when he left his company, he was frequently to ſpend the remaining part of the night in the ſtreet, or at leaſt was abandoned to gloomy reflections, which it is not ſtrange that he delayed as long as he could; and ſometimes forgot that he gave others pain to avoid it himſelf.

It cannot be ſaid, that he made uſe of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct; an irregular and diſſipated manner of life had made him the ſlave of every paſſion that

happened to be excited by the preſence of its object, and that ſlavery to his paſſions reciprocally produced a life irregular and diſſipated. He was not a maſter of his own motions, nor could promiſe any thing for the next day.

With regard to his œconomy, nothing can be added to the relation of his life. He appeared to think himſelf born to be ſupported by others, and diſpenſed from all neceſſity of providing for himſelf; he therefore never proſecuted any ſcheme of advantage, nor endeavoured even to ſecure the profits which his writings might have afforded him. His temper was, in conſequence of the dominion of his paſſions, uncertain and capricious; he was eaſily engaged, and eaſily diſguſted; but he is accuſed of retaining his hatred more tenaciouſly than his benevolence.

He was compaſſionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked (and very ſmall offences were ſufficient to provoke him,) he would proſecute his revenge with the utmoſt acrimony till his paſſion had ſubſided.

His friendſhip was therefore of little value; for though he was zealous in the ſupport or vindication of thoſe whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to truſt him, becauſe he conſidered himſelf as diſcharged by the firſt quarrel from ties of honour or gratitude; and would betray thoſe ſecrets which, in the warmth of confidence, had been imparted to him. This practice drew upon him an univerſal accuſation of ingratitude; nor can it be denied that he was very ready to ſet himſelf free from the load of an obligation; for he could not bear to concieve himſelf in a ſtate of dependence, his pride being equally powerful with his other paſſions, and appearing in the form of inſolence at one time, and of vanity at another. Vanity, the moſt innocent ſpecies of pride, was moſt frequently predominant: He could not eaſily leave off, when he had once begun to mention himſelf or his works; nor ever read his verſes without ſtealing his eyes from the page, to diſcover, in the faces of his audience, how they were affected with any favourite paſſage.

A kinder name than that of vanity ought to be given to the delicacy with which he was always careful to ſeparate his own merit from every other man's, and to reject that praiſe to which he had no claim. He did not forget, in mentioning his performances, to mark every line that had been ſuggeſted or amended; and was ſo accurate, as to relate

that he owed three words in *The Wanderer* to the advice of his friends.

His veracity was queſtioned, but with little reaſon; his accounts, though not indeed always the ſame, were generally conſiſtant. When he loved any man, he ſuppreſſed all his faults; and when he had been offended by him, concealed all his virtues: but his characters were generally true, ſo far as he proceeded; though it cannot be denied, that his partiality might have ſometimes the effect of falſehood.

In caſes indifferent, he was zealous for virtue, truth, and juſtice: he knew very well the neceſſity of goodneſs to the preſent and future happineſs of mankind; nor is there perhaps any writer, who has leſs endeavoured to pleaſe by flattering the appetites, or perverting the judgment.

As an author, therefore, and he now ceaſes to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had reſolved to ſuppreſs be excepted, he has very little to fear from the ſtricteſt moral or religious cenſure. And though he may not be altogether ſecure againſt the objections of the critic, it muſt however be acknowledged, that his works are the productions of a genius truly poetical; and what many writers who have been more laviſhly applauded cannot boaſt, that they have an original air, which has no reſemblance of any foregoing work, that the verſification and ſentiments have a caſt peculiar to themſelves, which no man can imitate with ſucceſs, becauſe what was nature in Savage, would in another be affectation. It muſt be confeſſed, that his deſcriptions are ſtriking, his images animated, his fictions juſtly imagined, and his allegories artfully purſued; that his diction is elevated, though ſometimes forced, and his numbers ſonorious and majeſtic, though frequently ſluggiſh and encumbered. Of his ſtyle, the general fault is harſhneſs, and its general excellence is dignity; of his ſentiments, the prevailing beauty is ſublimity, and uniformity the prevailing defect.

For his life, or for his writings, none, who candidly conſider his fortune, will think an apology either neceſſary or difficult. If he was not always ſufficiently inſtructed in his ſubject, his knowledge was at leaſt greater than could have been attained by others in the ſame ſtate. If his works were ſometimes unfiniſhed, accuracy cannot reaſonably be exacted from a man oppreſſed with want, which he has no hope of relieving but by a ſpeedy publication. The inſolence

and reſentment of which he is accuſed were not eaſily to be avoided by a great mind, irritated by perpetual hardſhips, and conſtrained hourly to return the ſpurns of contempt, and repreſs the inſolence of proſperity; and vanity may ſurely readily be pardoned in him, to whom life afforded no other comforts than barren praiſes, and the conſciouſneſs of deſerving them.

Thoſe are no proper judges of his conduct, who have ſlumbered away their time on the down of plenty; nor will any wiſe man preſume to ſay, "Had I been in Savage's condition, I ſhould have lived or written better than Savage."

This relation will not be wholly without its uſe, if thoſe who languiſh under any part of his ſufferings, ſhall be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only thoſe afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or thoſe who, in confidence, of ſuperior capacities or attainments, diſregard the common maxims of life, ſhall be reminded, that nothing will ſupply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, will make knowledge uſeleſs, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

SWIFT.

AN Account of Dr. SWIFT has been already collected, with great diligence and acuteneſs, by Dr. Hawkeſworth, according to a ſcheme which I laid before him in the intimacy of our friendſhip. I cannot therefore be expected to ſay much of a life, concerning which I had long ſince communicated my thoughts to a man capable of dignifying his narration with ſo much elegance of language and force of ſentiment.

JONATHAN SWIFT was, according to an account ſaid to be written by himſelf, the ſon of Jonathan Swift, an attorney, and was born at Dublin on St. Andrew's day, 1667: according to his own report, as delivered by Pope to Spence, he was born at Leiceſter, the ſon of a clergyman, who was a miniſter of a pariſh in Herefordſhire *. During his life the place of his birth was undetermined. He was contented to be called an Iriſhman by the Iriſh; but would occaſionally call himſelf an Engliſhman. The queſtion may, without much regret, be left in the obſcurity in which he delighted to involve it.

Whatever was his birth, his education was Iriſh. He was ſent at the age of ſix to the ſchool at Kilkenny, and in his fifteenth year (1682) was admitted into the Univerſity of Dublin.

In his academical ſtudies he was either not diligent or not happy. It muſt diſappoint every reader's expectation, that, when at the uſual time he claimed the Bachelorſhip of Arts, he was found by the examiners too conſpicuouſly deficient for regular admiſſion, and obtained his degree at laſt by *special favour*; a term uſed in that univerſity to denote want of merit.

Of this diſgrace it may be eaſily ſuppoſed that he was much aſhamed, and ſhame had its proper effect in producing reformation. He reſolved from that time to ſtudy eight hours a day, and continued his induſtry for ſeven years,

* *Spence's Anecdotes, vol. II. p.* 273.

with what improvement is ſufficiently known. This part of his ſtory well deſerves to be remembered; it may afford uſeful admonition and powerful encouragement to men, whoſe abilities have been made for a time uſeleſs by their paſſions or pleaſures, and who, having loſt one part of life in idleneſs, are tempted to throw away the remainder in deſpair.

In this courſe of daily application he continued three years longer at Dublin; and in this time, if the obſervation and memory of an old companion may be truſted, he drew the firſt ſketch of his *Tale of a Tub*.

When he was about one-and-twenty (1688) being by the death of Godwin Swift, his uncle, who had ſupported him, left without ſubſiſtence, he went to conſult his mother, who then lived at Leiceſter, about the future courſe of his life, and by her direction ſolicited the advice and patronage of Sir. William Temple, who had married one of Mrs. Swift's relations, and whoſe father, Sir John Temple, Maſter of the Rolls in Ireland, had lived in great familiarity of friendſhip with Godwin Swift, by whom Jonathan had been to that time maintained.

Temple received with ſufficient kindneſs the nephew of his father's friend, with whom he was, when they converſed together, ſo much pleaſed, that he detained him two years in his houſe. Here he became known to King William, who ſometimes viſited Temple when he was diſabled by the gout, and being attended by Swift in the garden, ſhewed him how to cut aſparagus in the Dutch way.

King William's notions were all military; and he expreſſed his kindneſs to Swift by offering to make him a captain of horſe.

When Temple removed to Moor-park, he took Swift with him; and when he was conſulted by the Earl of Portland about the expedience of complying with a bill then depending for making parliaments triennial, againſt which King William was ſtrongly prejudiced, after having in vain tried to ſhew the Earl that the propoſal involved nothing dangerous to royal power, he ſent Swift for the ſame purpoſe to the King. Swift, who probably was proud of his employment, and went with all the confidence of a young man, found his arguments and his art of diſplaying them, made totally ineffectual by the predetermination of the King; and uſed to mention this diſappointment as his firſt antidote againſt vanity.

Before he left Ireland he contracted a diſorder, as he thought, by eating too much fruit. The original of diſeaſes is commonly obſcure. Almoſt every boy eats as much fruit as he can get, without any great inconvenience. The diſeaſe of Swift was giddineſs with deafneſs, which attacked him from time to time, began very early, purſued him through life, and at laſt ſent him to the grave, deprived of reaſon.

Being much oppreſſed at Moor-park by this grievous malady, he was adviſed to try his native air, and went to Ireland; but, finding no benefit, returned to Sir William, at whoſe houſe he continued his ſtudies, and is known to have read, among other books, *Cyprian* and *Irenæus*. He thought exerciſe of great neceſſity, and uſed to run half a mile up and down a hill every two hours.

It is eaſy to imagine that the mode in which his firſt degree was conferred left him no great fondneſs for the Univerſity of Dublin, and therefore he reſolved to become a Maſter of Arts at Oxford. In the teſtimonial which he produced, the words of diſgrace were omitted, and he took his Maſters degree (July 5, 1692) with ſuch reception and regard as fully contented him.

While he lived with Temple, he uſed to pay his mother at Leiceſter an yearly viſit. He travelled on foot, unleſs ſome violent weather drove him into a waggon, and at night he would go to a penny lodging, where he purchaſed clean ſheets for ſix pence. This practice Lord Orrery imputes to his innate love of groſſneſs and vulgarity: ſome may aſcribe it to his deſire of ſurveying human life through all its varieties; and others, perhaps with equal probability, to a paſſion which ſeems to have been deep fixed in his heart, the love of a ſhilling.

In time he began to think that his attendance at Moor-park deſerved ſome other recompence than the pleaſure, however mingled with improvement, of Temple's converſation; and grew ſo impatient, that (1694) he went away in diſcontent.

Temple, conſcious of having given reaſon for complaint, is ſaid to have made him Deputy Maſter of the Rolls in Ireland; which, according to his kinſman's account, was an office which he knew him not able to diſcharge. Swift therefore reſolved to enter into the Church, in which he had at firſt no higher hopes than of the chaplainſhip to the Factory at Liſbon; but being recommended to Lord Capel,

he obtained the prebend of *Kilroot* in *Connor*, of about a hundred pounds a year.

But the infirmities of Temple made a companion like Swift ſo neceſſary, that he invited him back, with a promiſe to procure him Engliſh preferment, in exchange for the prebend which he deſired him to reſign. With this requeſt Swift complied, having perhaps equally repented their ſeparation, and they lived on together with mutual ſatisfaction; and, in the four years that paſſed between his return and Temples death, it is probable that he wrote the *Tale of a Tub* and the *Battle of the Books*.

Swift began early to think, or to hope, that he was a poet, and wrote Pindaric Odes to Temple, to the King, and to the Athenian Society, a knot of obſcure men, who publiſhed a periodical pamphlet of anſwers to queſtions, ſent, or ſuppoſed to be ſent, by Letters. I have been told that Dryden, having peruſed theſe verſes, ſaid, "Couſin Swift, you will never be a poet;" and that this denunciation was the motive of Swift's perpetual malevolence to Dryden.

In 1699 Temple died, and left a legacy with his manuſcripts to Swift, for whom he had obtained, from King William, a promiſe of the firſt prebend that ſhould be vacant at Weſtminſter or Canterbury.

That this promiſe might not be forgotten, Swift dedicated to the King the poſthumous works with which he was intruſted; but neither the dedication, nor tenderneſs for the man whom he once had treated with confidence and fondneſs, revived in King William the remembrance of his promiſe. Swift awhile attended the Court; but ſoon found his ſolicitations hopeleſs.

He was then invited by the Earl of Berkeley to accompany him into Ireland, as his private ſecretary; but after having done the buſineſs till their arrival at Dublin, he then found that one *Bush* had perſuaded the Earl that a clergyman was not a proper ſecretary, and had obtained the office for himſelf. In a man like Swift, ſuch circumvention and inconſtancy muſt have excited violent indignation.

But he had yet more to ſuffer. Lord Berkeley had the diſpoſal of the deanery of Derry, and Swift expectad to obtain it; but by the ſecretary's influence, ſuppoſed to have been ſecured by a bribe, it was beſtowed on ſomebody elſe; and Swift was diſmiſſed with the livings of *Laracor* and *Rathbeggin*, in the dioceſe of Meath, which together did not equal half the value of the deanery.

At Laracor he increaſed the parochial duty by reading prayers on Wedneſdays and Fridays, and performed all the offices of his profeſſion with great decency and exactneſs.

Soon after his ſettlement at Laracor, he invited to Ireland the unfortunate Stella, a young woman whoſe name was Johnſon, the daughter of the ſteward of Sir William Temple, who, in conſideration of her father's virtues, left her a thouſand pounds. With her came Mrs. Dingley, whoſe whole fortune was twenty-ſeven pounds a year for her life. With theſe Ladies he paſſed his hours of relaxation, and to them he opened his boſom; but they never reſided in the ſame houſe, nor did he ſee either without a witneſs. They lived at the Parſonage, when Swift was away; and when he returned, removed to a lodging, or to the houſe of a neighbouring clergyman.

Swift was not one of thoſe minds which amaze the world with early pregnancy: his firſt work, except his few poetical Eſſays, was the *Diſſentions in Athens and Rome*, publiſhed (1701) in his thirty-fourth year. After its appearance, paying a viſit to ſome biſhop, he heard mention made of the new pamphlet that Burnet had written, replete with political knowledge. When he ſeemed to doubt Burnet's right to the work, he was told by the Biſhop, that he was *a young man;* and, ſtill perſiſting to doubt, that he was *a very poſitive young man.*

Three years afterward (1704) was publiſhed *The Tale of a Tub*: of this book charity may be perſuaded to think that it might be written by a man of a peculiar character, without ill intention; but it is certainly of dangerous example. That Swift was its author, though it be univerſally believed, was never owned by himſelf, nor very well proved by any evidence; but no other claimant can be produced, and he did not deny it when Archbiſhop Sharpe and the Ducheſs of Somerſet, by ſhewing it to the Queen, debarred him from a biſhopric.

When this wild work firſt raiſed the attention of the public, Sacheverell, meeting Smalridge, tried to flatter him, by ſeeming to think him the author; but Smalridge anſwered with indignation, "Not all that you and I have in the world, nor all that ever we ſhall have, ſhould hire me to write the *Tale of a Tub.*"

The digreſſions relating to Wotton and Bentley muſt be confeſſed to diſcover want of knowledge, or want of integrity; he did not underſtand the two controverſies, or he

willingly misrepresented them. But Wit can stand its ground against Truth only a little while. The honours due to learning have been justly distributed by the decision of posterity.

The Battle of the Books is so like the *Combat des Livres*, which the same question concerning the Ancients and Moderns had produced in France, that the improbability of such a coincidence of thoughts without communciation is not in my opinion, balanced by the anonymous protestation prefixed, in which all knowledge of the French book is peremptorily disowned.

For some time after Swift was probably employed in solitary study, gaining the qualifications requisite for future eminence. How often he visited England, and with what diligence he attended his parishes, I know not. It was not till about four years afterwards that he became a professed author, and then one year (1708) produced *The Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man;* the ridicule of Astrology, under the name of *Bickerstaff:* the *Arguments against abolishing Christianity*: and the defence of the *Sacramental Test.*

The Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man is written with great coolness, moderation, ease, and perspicuity. The *Argument against abolishing Christianity* is a very happy and judicious irony. One passage in it deserves to be selected.

"If Christianity were once abolished, how could the free-thinkers, the strong reasoners, and the men of profound learning, be able to find another subject so calculated, in all points, wherein to display their abilities? What wonderful productions of wit should we be deprived of from those, whose genius, by continual practice, hath been wholly turned upon raillery and invectives against religion, and would therefore never be able to shine, or distinguish themselves, upon any other subject? We are daily complaining of the great decline of wit among us, and would take away the greatest, perhaps the only, topic we have left. Who would ever have suspected Asgill for a wit, or Toland for a philosopher, if the inexhaustible stock of Christianity had not been at hand to provide them with materials? What other subject, through all art or nature, could have produced Tindal for a profound author, or furnished him with readers. It is the wise choice of the subject that alone adorns and distinguishes the writer. For had an hundred

pens as theſe been employed on the ſide of religion, they would have immediately ſunk into ſilence and oblivion."

The reaſonableneſs of a *Test* is not hard to be proved; but perhaps it muſt be allowed that the proper teſt has not been choſen.

The attention paid to the papers publiſhed under the name of *Bickerſtaff*, induced Steel when he projected the *Tatler*, to aſſume an appellation which had already gained poſſeſſion of the reader's notice.

In the year following he wrote a *Project for the Advancement of Religion*, addreſſed to Lady Berkeley; by whoſe kindneſs it is not unlikely that he was advanced to his benefices. To this project, which is formed with great purity of intention, and diſplayed with ſpritelineſs and elegance, it can only be objected, that, like many projects, it is, if not generally impracticable, yet evidently hopeleſs, as it ſuppoſes more zeal, concord, and perſeverance, than a view of mankind gives reaſon for expecting.

He wrote likewiſe this year a *Vindication of Bickerſtaff*; and an explanation of an *Ancient Prophecy*, part written after the facts and the reſt never completed, but well planned to excite amazement.

Soon after began the buſy and important part of Swift's life. He was employed (1710) by the primate of Ireland to ſolicit the Queen for a remiſſion of the Firſt Fruits and Twentieth parts of the Iriſh Clergy. With this purpoſe he had recourſe to Mr. Harley, to whom he was mentioned as a man neglected and oppreſſed by the laſt miniſtry, becauſe he had refuſed to co-operate with ſome of their ſchemes. What he had refuſed, has never been told; what he had ſuffered was, I ſuppoſe, the excluſion from a biſhoprick by the remonſtrances of Sharpe, whom he deſcribes as *the harmleſs tool of others hate*, and whom he repreſents as afterwards *ſuing for pardon*.

Harley's deſigns and ſituation were ſuch as made him glad of an auxiliary ſo well qualified for his ſervice; he therefore ſoon admitted him to familiarity, whether ever to confidence ſome have made a doubt; but it would have been difficult to excite his zeal without perſuading him that he was truſted, and not very eaſy to delude him by falſe perſuaſions.

He was certainly admitted to thoſe meetings in which the firſt hints and original plan of action are ſuppoſed to have been formed; and was one of the ſixteen Miniſters,

or agents of the Miniſtry, who met weekly at each other's houſes, and were united by the name of *Brother*.

Being not immediately conſidered as an obdurate Tory, he converſed indiſcriminately with all the wits, and was yet the friend of Steele; who, in the *Tatler*, which began in 1710, confeſſes the advantages of his converſation, and mentions ſomething contributed by him to his paper. But he was now immerging into political controverſy; for the ſame year produced the *Examiner*, of which Swift wrote thirty-three papers. In argument he may be allowed to have the advantage; for where a wide ſyſtem of conduct, and the whole of a public character, is laid open to enquiry, the accuſer having the choice of facts, muſt be very unſkilful if he does not prevail; but with regard to wit, I am afraid none of Swift's papers will be found equal to thoſe by which Addiſon oppoſed him.

Early in the next year he publiſhed a *Proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English Tongue, in* a Letter to the Earl of Oxford; written without much knowledge of the general nature of language, and without any accurate enquiry into the hiſtory of other tongues. The certainty and ſtability which, contrary to all experience, he thinks attainable, he propoſes to ſecure inſtituting an academy; the decrees of which every man would have been willing, and many would have been proud to diſobey, and which, being renewed by ſucceſſive elections, would in a ſhort time have differed from itſelf.

He wrote the ſame year a *Letter to the October Club*, a number of Tory Gentlemen ſent from the country to Parliament, who formed themſelves into a club, to the number of about an hundred, and met to animate the zeal and raiſe the expectations of each other. They thought, with great reaſon, that the Miniſters were loſing opportunities; that ſufficient uſe was not made of the ardour of the nation; they called loudly for more changes, and ſtronger efforts; and demanded the puniſhment of part, and the diſmiſſion of the reſt, of thoſe whom they conſidered as public robbers.

Their eagerneſs was not gratified by the Queen, or by Harley. The Queen was probably ſlow becauſe ſhe was afraid, and Harley was ſlow becauſe he was doubtful; he was a Tory only by neceſſity, or for convenience; and when he had power in his hands, had no ſettled purpoſe for which he ſhould employ it; forced to gratify to a certain degree the Tories who ſupported him, but unwilling

to make his reconcilement to the Whigs utterly desperate, he corresponded at once with the two expectants of the Crown, and kept, as has been observed, the succession undetermined. Not knowing what to do, he did nothing; and with the fate of a double-dealer, at last he lost his power, but kept his enemies.

Swift seems to have concurred in opinion with the *October Club;* but it was not in his power to quicken the tardiness of Harley, whom he stimulated as much, as he could, but with little effect. He that knows not whether to go, is in no haste to move. Harley, who was perhaps not quick by nature, became yet more slow by irresolution; and was content to hear that dilatoriness lamented as natural, which he applauded in himself as politic.

Without the Tories, however, nothing could be done; and as they were not to be gratified, they must be appeased; and the conduct of the Minister, if it could not be vindicated, was to be plausibly excused.

Swift now attained the zenith of his political importance: he published (1712) the *Conduct of the Allies*, ten days before the Parliament assembled. The purpose was to persuade the nation to a peace; and never had any writer more success. The people, who had been amused with bonfires and triumphal procession, and looked with idolatry on the General and his friends, who, as they thought, had made England the arbitress of nations, were confounded between shame and rage, when they found that *mines had been exhausted, and millions destroyed*, to secure the Dutch or aggrandize the Emperor, without any advantage to ourselves; that we had been bribing our neighbours to fight their own quarrel; and that amongst our enemies we might number our allies.

That is now no longer doubted of which the nation was then first informed, that the war was unnecessarily protracted to fill the pockets of Malborough; and that it would have been continued without end, if he could have continued his annual plunder. But Swift, I suppose, did not yet know what he has since written, that a commission was drawn which would have appointed him General for life, had it not become ineffectual by the resolution of Lord Cowper, who refused the seal.

Whatever is received, say the schools, *is received in proportion to recipient.* The power of a political treatise depends much upon the disposition of the people; the nation

was then combuſtible, and a ſpark ſet it on fire. It is boaſted, that between November and January eleven thouſand were ſold; a great number at that time, when we were not yet a nation of readers. To its propagation certainly no agency of power or influence was wanting. It furniſhed arguments for converſation, ſpeeches for debate, and materials for parliamentary reſolutions.

Yet, ſurely, whoever ſurveys this wonder-working pamphlet with cool peruſal, will confeſs that its efficacy was ſupplied by the paſſions of its readers; that it operates by the mere weight of facts, with very little aſſiſtance from the hand that produced them.

This year (1712) he publiſhed his *Reflections on the Barrier Treaty*, which carries on the deſign of his *Conduct of the Allies*, and ſhews how little regard in that negotiation had been ſhown to the intereſt of England, and how much of the conquered country had been demanded by the Dutch.

This was followed by *Remarks on the Biſhop of Sarum's Introduction to his third Volume of the Hiſtory of Reformation*; a pamphlet which Burnet publiſhed as an alarm, to warn the nation of the approach of Popery. Swift, who ſeems to have diſliked the Biſhop with ſomething more than political averſion, treats him like one whom he is glad of an opportunity to inſult.

Swift, being now the declared favourite and ſuppoſed confident of the Tory Miniſtry, was treated by all that depended on the Court with the reſpect which dependents know how to pay. He ſoon began to feel part of the miſery of greatneſs; he that could ſay he knew him, conſidered himſelf as having fortune in his power. Commiſſions, ſolicititations, remonſtrances, crowded about him; he was expected to do every man's buſineſs, to procure employment for one, and to retain it for another. In aſſiſting thoſe who addreſſed him, he repreſents himſelf as ſufficiently diligent; and deſires to have others believe, what he probably believed himſelf, that by his interpoſition many Whigs of merit, and among them Addiſon and Congreve, were continued in their places. But every man of known influence has ſo many petitions which he cannot grant, that he muſt neceſſarily offend more than he gratifies, becauſe the preference given to one affords all the reſt a reaſon for complaint. *When I give away a place*, ſaid Lewis XIV. *I make an hundred diſcontented, and one ungrateful.*

Much has been ſaid of the equality and independence which he preſerved in his converſation with the Miniſters, of the frankneſs of his remonſtrances, and the familiarity of his friendſhip. In accounts of this kind a few ſingle incidents are ſet againſt the general tenour of behaviour. No man, however, can pay a more ſervile tribute to the Great, than by ſuffering his liberty in their preſence to aggrandize him in his own eſteem. Between different ranks of the community there is neceſſarily ſome diſtance: he who is called by his ſuperior to paſs the interval, may properly accept the invitation; but petulance and obtruſion are rarely produced by magnanimity; nor have often any nobler cauſe than the pride of importance, and the malice of inferiority. He who knows himſelf neceſſary may ſet, while that neceſſity laſts, a high value upon himſelf; as, in a lower condition, a ſervant eminently ſkilful may be ſaucy; but he is ſaucy only becauſe he is ſervile. Swift appears to have preſerved the kindneſs of the great when they wanted him no longer; and therefore it muſt be allowed, that the childiſh freedom, to which he ſeems enough inclined, was overpowered by his better qualities.

His diſintereſtedneſs has been likewiſe mentioned; a ſtrain of heroiſm, which would have been in his condition romantic and ſuperfluous. Eccleſiaſtical benefices, when they become vacant, muſt be given away; and the friends of Power may, if there be no inherent diſqualification, reaſonably expect them. Swift accepted (1713) the deanery of St. Patrick, the beſt preferment that his friends could venture to give him. That Miniſtry was in a great degree ſupported by the Clergy, who were not yet reconciled to the author of the *Tale of a Tub*, and would not without much diſcontent and indignation have borne to ſee him inſtalled in an Engliſh Cathedral.

He refuſed, indeed, fifty pounds from Lord Oxford; but he accepted afterwards a draught of a thouſand upon the Exchequer, which was intercepted by the Queen's death, and which he reſigned, as he ſays himſelf, *multa gemens, with many a groan.*

In the midſt of his power and his politics, he kept a journal of his viſits, his walks, his interviews with Miniſters, and quarrels with his ſervant, and tranſmitted it to Mrs. Johnſon and Mrs. Dingley, to whom he knew that whatever befel him was intereſting, and no accounts could be too minute. Whether theſe diurnal trifles were properly

expoſed to eyes which had never received any pleaſure from the preſence of the Dean, may be reaſonably doubted; they have however, ſome odd attraction; the reader, finding freequent mention of names which he has been uſed to conſider as important, goes on in hope of information; and as there is nothing to fatigue attention, if he is diſappointed he can hardly complain. It is eaſy to perceive, from every page, that though ambition preſſed Swift into a life of buſtle, the wiſh for a life of eaſe was always returning.

He went to take poſſeſſion of his deanery, as ſoon as he had obtained it; but he was not ſuffered to ſtay in Ireland more than a fortnight before he was recalled to England, that he might reconcile Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, who began to look on one another with malevolence, which every day increaſed, and which Bolingbroke appeared to retain in his laſt years.

Swift contrived an interview, from which they both departed diſcontented: he procured a ſecond, which only convinced him that the feud was irreconcileable; he told them his opinion, that all was loſt. This denunciation was contradicted by Oxford, but Bolingbroke whiſpered that he was right.

Before this violent diſſention had ſhattered the Miniſtry, Swift had publiſhed, in the beginning of the year (1714,) *The public Spirit of the Whigs*, in anſwer to *The Criſis*, a pamphlet for which *Steele* was expelled from the Houſe of Commons. Swift was now ſo far alienated from *Steele* as to think him no longer entitled to decency, and therefore treats him ſometimes with contempt, and ſometimes with abhorrence.

In this pamphlet the Scotch were mentioned in terms ſo provoking to that irritable nation, that, reſolving *not to be offended with impunity*, the Scotch Lords in a body demanded an audience of the Queen, and ſolicited reparation. A proclamation was iſſued, in which three hundred pounds was offered for diſcovery of the author. From this ſtorm he was, as he relates, *ſecure by a ſleight;* of what kind, or by whoſe prudence, is not known; and ſuch was the increaſe of his reputation, that the Scottiſh *Nation applied again that he would be their friend.*

He was become ſo formidable to the Whigs, that his familiarity with the Miniſters was clamoured at in Parlia-

ment, particularly by two men, afterwards of great note, *Aislabie* and *Walpole*.

But, by the diſunion of his great friends, his importance and his deſigns were now at an end, and ſeeing his ſervices at laſt uſeleſs, he retired about June 1714) into Berkſhire, where, in the houſe of a friend, he wrote what was then ſuppreſſed, but has ſince appeared under the title of *Free Thoughts on the present state of Affairs*.

While he was waiting in this retirement for events which time or chance might bring to paſs, the death of the Queen broke down at once the whole ſyſtem of Tory Politics; and nothing remained but to withdraw from the implacability of triumphant Whiggiſm, and ſhelter himſelf in unenvied obſcurity.

The accounts of his reception in Ireland, given by Lord Orrery and Dr. Delany, are ſo different, that the credit of writers, both undoubtedly veracious, cannot be ſaved, but by ſuppoſing what I think is true, that they ſpeak of different times. When Delany ſays that he was received with reſpect, he means for the firſt fortnight when he came to take legal poſſeſſion; and when Lord Orrery tells that he was pelted by the populace, he is to be underſtood of the time when, after the Queen's death, he became a ſettled reſident.

The Archbiſhop of Dublin gave him at firſt ſome diſturbance in the exerciſe of his juriſdiction; but it was ſoon diſcovered, that between prudence and integrity he was ſeldom in the wrong; and that, when he was right, his ſpirit did not eaſily yield to oppoſition.

Having ſo lately quitted the tumults of a party and the intrigues of a court, they ſtill kept his thoughts in agitation, as the ſea fluctuates a while when the ſtorm has ceaſed. He therefore filled his hours with ſome hiſtorical attempts, relating to the *Change of the Ministers*, and *the Conduct of the Ministry*. He likewiſe is ſaid to have written a *History of the Four last Years of Queen Anne*, which he began in her lifetime, and afterwards laboured with great attention, but never publiſhed. It was after his death in the hands of Lord Orrery and Dr. King. A book under that title was publiſhed, with Swift's name, by Dr. Lucas; of which I can only ſay, that it ſeemed by no means to correſpond with the notions that I had formed of it, from a converſation which I once heard between the Earl of Orrery and old Mr. Lewis.

Swift now, much againſt his will, commenced Iriſhman for life, and was to contrive how he might be beſt accommodated in a country where he conſidered himſelf as in a ſtate of exile. It ſeems that his firſt recourſe was to piety. The thoughts of death ruſhed upon him, at this time, with ſuch inceſſant importunity, that they took poſſeſſion of his mind, when he firſt waked, for many years together. He opened his houſe by a public table two days a week, and found his entertainments gradually frequented by more and more viſitants of learning among the men, and of elegance among the women. Mrs. Johnſon had left the country, and lived in lodgings not far from the deanery. On his public days ſhe regulated the table, but appeared at it as a mere gueſt, like other Ladies.

On other days he often dined, at a ſtated price, with Mr. Worral, a clergyman of his cathedral, whoſe houſe was recommended by the peculiar neatneſs and pleaſantry of his wife. To this frugal mode of living, he was firſt diſpoſed by care to pay ſome debts which he had contracted, and he continued it for the pleaſure of accumulating money. His avarice, however, was not ſuffered to obſtruct the claims of his dignity; he was ſerved in plate, and uſed to ſay that he was the pooreſt gentleman in Ireland that eat upon plate, and the richeſt that lived without a coach.

How he ſpent the reſt of his time, and how he employed his hours of ſtudy, has been enquired with hopeleſs curioſity. For who can give an account of another's ſtudies? Swift was not likely to admit any to his privacies, or to impart a minute account of his buſineſs or his leiſure.

Soon after (1716), in his forty-ninth year, he was privately married to Mrs. Johnſon, by Dr. Aſhe, Biſhop of Clogher, as Dr. Madden told me, in the garden. The marriage made no change in their mode of life; they lived in different houſes, as before; nor did ſhe ever lodge in the deanery but when Swift was ſeized with a fit of giddineſs. "It would be difficult," ſays Lord Orrery, "to prove that they were ever afterwards together without a third perſon."

The dean of St. Patrick's lived in a private manner, known and regarded only by his friends, till, about the year 1720, he, by a pamphlet, recommended to the Iriſh the uſe, and conſequently the improvement, of their manufacture. For a man to uſe the productions of his own la-

bour is surely a natural right, and to like best what he makes himself is a natural passion. But to excite this passion, and enforce this right, appeared so criminal to those who had an interest in the English trade, that the printer was imprisoned; and, as Hawkesworth justly observes, the attention of the public being by this outrageous resentment turned upon the proposal, the author was by consequence made popular.

In 1723 died Mrs. Van Homrigh, a woman made unhappy by her admiration of wit, and ignominiously distinguished by the name of *Vanessa*, whose conduct has been already sufficiently discussed, and whose history is too well known to be minutely repeated. She was a young woman fond of literature, whom *Decanus* the *Dean*, called *Cadenus* by transposition of the letters, took pleasure in directing and instructing; till, from being proud of his praise, she grew fond of his person. Swift was then about forty-seven, at an age when vanity is strongly excited by the amorous attention of a young woman. If it be said that Swift should have checked a passion which he never meant to gratify, recourse must be had to that extenuation which he so much despised, *men are but men*: perhaps however he did not at first know his own mind, and, as he represents himself, was undetermined. For his admission of her courtship, and his indulgence of her hopes after his marriage to Stella, no other honest plea can be found, than that he delayed a disagreeable discovery from time to time, dreading the immediate bursts of distress, and watching for a favourable moment. She thought herself neglected, and died of disappointment; having ordered by her will the poem to be published, in which *Cadenus* had proclaimed her excellence, and confessed his love. The effect of the publication upon the Dean and Stella is thus related by Delany.

"I have good reason to believe, that they both were greatly shocked and distressed (though it may be differently) upon this occasion. The Dean made a tour to the South of Ireland, for about two months, at this time, to dissipate his thoughts, and give place to obloquy. And Stella retired (upon the earnest invitation of the owner) to the house of a cheerful, generous, good-natured friend of the Dean's, whom she also much loved and honoured. There my informer often saw her; and, I have reason to believe, used his utmost endeavours to relieve, support, and amuse her, in this sad situation.

"One little incident he told me of, on that occaſion, I think I ſhall never forget. As her friend was an hoſpitable, open-hearted man, well-beloved, and largely acquainted, it happened one day that ſome gentlemen dropt in to dinner, who were ſtrangers to Stella's ſituation; and as the poem of *Cadenus and Vanessa* was then the general topic of converſation, one of them ſaid, 'Surely that Vaneſſa muſt be an extraordinary woman, that could inſpire the Dean to write ſo finely upon her.' Mrs. Johnſon ſmiled, and anſwered, "that ſhe thought that point not quite ſo clear; for it was well known the Dean could write finely upon a broomſtick."

The great acquiſition of eſteem and influence was made by the *Drapier's Letters* in 1724. One Wood, of Wolverhampton in Staffordſhire, a man enterpriſing and rapacious, had, as is ſaid, by a preſent to the Ducheſs of Munſter, obtained a patent, empowering him to coin one hundred and eighty thouſand pounds of halfpence and farthings for the kingdom of Ireland, in which there was a very inconvenient and embarraſſing ſcarcity of copper coin; ſo that it was poſſible to run in debt upon the credit of a piece of money; for the cook or keeper of an alehouſe could not refuſe to ſupply a man that had ſilver in his hand, and the buyer would not leave his money without change.

The project was therefore plauſible. The ſcarcity, which was already great, Wood took care to make greater, by agents who gathered up the old half-pence; and was about to turn his braſs into gold, by pouring the treaſures of his new mint upon Ireland, when Swift, finding that the metal was debaſed to an enormous degree, wrote Letters, under the name of *M. B. Drapier*, to ſhew the folly of receiving, and the miſchief that muſt enſue by giving, gold and ſilver for coin worth perhaps not a third part of its nominal value.

The nation was alarmed; the new coin was univerſally refuſed: but the governors of Ireland conſidered reſiſtance to the King's patent as highly criminal; and one Whitſhed, then Chief Juſtice, who had tried the printer of the former pamphlet, and ſent out the Jury nine times, till by clamour and menaces they were frighted into a ſpecial verdict, now preſented the *Drapier*, but could not prevail on the Grand Jury to find the bill.

Lord Carteret and the Privy Council publiſhed a proclamation, offering three hundred pounds for diſcovering the author of the Fourth Letter. Swift had concealed himſelf from his printers, and truſted only his butler, who tranſcribed the paper. The man, immediately after the appearance of the proclamation, ſtrolled from the houſe, and ſtaid out all night, and part of the next day. There was reaſon enough to fear that he had betrayed his maſter for the reward; but he came home, and the Dean ordered him to put off his livery, and leave the houſe; "for," ſays he, "I know that my life is in your power, and I will not bear out of fear, either your inſolence or negligence." The man excuſed his fault with great ſubmiſſion, and begged that he might be confined in the houſe while it was in his power to endanger his maſter; but the Dean reſolutely turned him out, without taking father notice of him, till the term of information had expired, and then received him again. Soon afterwards he ordered him and the reſt of the ſervants into his preſence, without telling his intentions, and bade them take notice that their fellow-ſervant was no longer Robert the butler; but that his integrity had made him Mr. Blackeney, verger of St. Patrick's; an officer whoſe income was between thirty and forty pounds a year: yet he ſtill continued for ſome years to ſerve his old maſter as his butler.

Swift was known from this time by the appellation of *The Dean*. He was honoured by the populace, as the champion, patron, and inſtructor of Ireland; and gained ſuch power as, conſidered both in its extent and duration, ſcarely any man has ever enjoyed without greater wealth or higher ſtation.

He was from this important year the oracle of the traders, and the idol of the rabble, and by conſequence was feared and courted by all to whom the kindneſs of the traders or the populace was neceſſary. The *Drapier* was a ſign; the *Drapier* was a health; and which way ſoever the eye or the ear was turned, ſome tokens were found of the nation's gratitude to the *Drapier*.

The benefit was indeed great; he had reſcued Ireland from a very oppreſſive and predatory invaſion; and the popularity which he had gained he was diligent to keep, by appearing forward and zealous on every occaſion where the public intereſt was ſuppoſed to be involved. Nor did he much ſcruple to boaſt his influence; for when, upon

ſome attempts to regulate the coin, Aarchbiſhop Boulter, then one of the Juſtices, accuſed him of exaſperating the people, he exculpated himſelf by ſaying, "If I had liſted up my finger, they would have torn you to pieces."

But the pleaſure of popularity was ſoon interrupted by domeſtic miſery. Mrs. Johnſon, whoſe converſation was to him the great ſoftener of the ills of life, began in the year of the Drapier's triumph to decline; and two years afterwards was ſo waſted with ſickneſs, that her recovery was conſidered as hopeleſs.

Swift was then in England, and had been invited by Lord Bolingbroke to paſs the winter with him in France; but this call of calamity haſtened him to Ireland, where perhaps his preſence contributed to reſtore her to imperfect and tottering health.

He was now ſo much at eaſe, that (1727) he returned to England; where he collected three volumes of Miſcellanies in conjuction with Pope, who prefixed a querulous and apologetical Preface.

This important year ſent likewiſe into the world *Gulliver's Travels*, a production ſo new and ſtrange, that it filled the reader with a mingled emotion of merriment and amazement. It was received with ſuch avidity, that the price of the firſt edition was raiſed before the ſecond could be made; it was read by the high and the low, the learned and the illiterate. Criticiſm was for a while loſt in wonder; no rules of judgment were applied to a book written in open defiance of truth and regularity. But when diſtinctions came to be made, the part which gave leaſt pleaſure was that which deſcribes the *Flying Island*, and that which gave moſt diſguſt muſt be the hiſtory of the *Houyhnhums*.

While Swift was enjoying the reputation of his new work, the news of the King's death arrived; and he kiſſed the hands of the new King and Queen, three days after their acceſſion.

By the Queen, when ſhe was Princeſs, he had been treated with ſome diſtinction, and was well received by her in her exaltation; but whether ſhe gave hopes which ſhe never took care to ſatisfy, or he formed expectations which ſhe never meant to raiſe, the event was, that he always afterwards thought on her with malevolence, and particularly charged her with breaking her promiſe of ſome medals which ſhe engaged to ſend him.

I know not whether ſhe had not, in her turn, ſome reaſon for complaint. A Letter was ſent her, not ſo much entreating as requiring her patronage of Mrs. Barber, an ingenious Iriſhwoman, who was then begging ſubſcriptions for her Poems. To this Letter was ſubſcribed the name of *Swift*, and it has all the appearances of his diction and ſentiments; but it was not written in his hand, and had ſome little improprieties. When he was charged with this Letter, he laid hold of the inaccuracies, and urged the improbability of the accuſation; but never denied it: he ſhuffles between cowardice and veracity, and talks big when he ſays nothing.

He ſeemed deſirous enough of recommencing courtier, and endeavoured to gain the kindneſs of Mrs. Howard, remembering what Mrs. Maſham had performed in former times; but his flatteries were, like thoſe of the other wits, unſucceſsful; the Lady either wanted power, or had no ambition of poetical immortality.

He was ſeized not long afterwards by a fit of giddineſs, and again heard of the ſickneſs and danger of Mrs. Johnſon. He then left the houſe of Pope, as it ſeems, with very little ceremony, finding that *two ſick friends cannot live together;* and did not write to him till he found himſelf at Cheſter.

He returned to a home of ſorrow: poor Stella was ſinking into the grave, and, after a languiſhing decay of about two months, died in her forty-fourth year, on January 28, 1728. How much he wiſhed her life, his papers ſhew; nor can it be doubted that he dreaded the death of her whom he loved moſt, aggravated by the conſciouſneſs that himſelf had haſtened it.

Beauty and the power of pleaſing, the greateſt external advantages that woman can deſire or poſſeſs, were fatal to the unfortunate Stella. The man whom ſhe had the misfortune to love was, as Delany obſerves, fond of ſingularity, and deſirous to make a mode of happineſs for himſelf, different from the general courſe of things and order of Providence. From the time of her arrival in Ireland he ſeems reſolved to keep her in his power, and therefore hindered a match ſufficiently advantageous, by accumulating unreaſonable demands, and preſcribing conditions that could not be performed. While ſhe was at her own diſpoſal he did not conſider his poſſeſſion as ſecure; reſentment, ambition, or caprice, might ſeperate them; he was therefore reſolved to make *aſſurance double ſure*, and to appro-

priate her by a private marriage, to which he had annexed the expectation of all the pleaſures of perfect friendſhip, without the uneaſineſs of conjugal reſtraint. But with this ſtate poor Stella was not ſatisfied; ſhe never was treated as a wife, and to the world ſhe had the appearance of a miſtreſs. She lived ſullenly on, in hope that in time he would own and receive her; but the time did not come till the change of his manners and depravation of his mind made her tell him, when he offered to acknowledge her that *it was too late*. She then gave up herſelf to ſorrowful reſentment, and died under the tyranny of him, by whom ſhe was in the higheſt degree loved and honoured.

What were her claims to this excentric tenderneſs, by which the laws of nature were violated to retain her curioſity will enquire; but how ſhall it be gratified? Swift was a lover; his teſtimony may be ſuſpected. Delany and the Iriſh ſaw with Swift's eyes, and therefore add little confirmation. That ſhe was virtuous, beautiful, and elegant, in a very high degree, ſuch admiration from ſuch a lover makes it very probable; but ſhe had not much literature, for ſhe could not ſpell her own language; and of her wit ſo loudly vaunted, the ſmart ſayings which Swift himſelf has collected afford no ſplendid ſpecimen.

The reader of Swift's *Letter to a Lady on her Marriage*, may be allowed to doubt whether his opinion of female excellence ought implicitly to be admitted; for if his general thoughts on women were ſuch as he exhibits, a very little ſenſe in a Lady would enrapture, and a very little virtue would aſoniſh him. Stella's ſupremacy therefore, was perhaps only local; ſhe was great, becauſe her aſſociates were little.

In ſome Remarks lately publiſhed on the Life of Swift, this marriage is mentioned as fabulous, or doubtful; but, alas! poor Stella, as Dr. Madden told me, related her melancholy ſtory to Dr. Sheridan, when he attended her as a clergyman to prepare her for death; and Delany mentions it not with doubt, but only with regret. Swift never mentioned her without a ſigh.

The reſt of his life was ſpent in Ireland, in a country to which not even power almoſt deſpotic, nor flattery almoſt idolatrous, could reconcile him. He ſometimes wiſhed to viſit England, but always found ſome reaſon of delay. He tells Pope, in the decline of life, that he hopes once more

to ſee him; *but if not*, ſays he, *we must part, as all human beings have parted.*

After the death of Stella, his benevolence was contracted, and his ſeverity exaſperated; he drove his acquaintance from his table, and wondered why he was deſerted. But he continued his attention to the public, and wrote from time to time ſuch directions, admonitions, or cenſures, as the exigency of affairs, in his opinion, made proper; and nothing fell from his pen in vain.

In a ſhort poem on the Preſbyterians, whom he always regarded with deteſtation, he beſtowed one ſtricture upon Betteſworth, a lawyer eminent for his inſolence to the clergy, which, from very conſiderable reputation, brought him into immediate and univerſal contempt. Betteſworth, enraged at his diſgrace and loſs, went to Swift and demanded whether he was the author of that poem? "Mr. Betteſworth," anſwered he, "I was in my youth acquainted with great lawyers, who, knowing my diſpoſition to ſatire, adviſed me, that if any ſcoundrel or blockhead whom I had lampooned ſhould aſk, *Are you the author of this paper?* I ſhould tell him that I was not the author; and therefore I tell you, Mr. Betteſworth, that I am not the author of theſe lines."

Betteſworth was ſo little ſatisfied with this account, that he publicly profeſſed his reſolution of a violent and corporal revenge; but the inhabitants of St. Patrick's diſtrict embodied themſelves in the Dean's defence. Betteſworth declared in Parliament, that Swift had deprived him of twelve hundred pounds a year.

Swift was popular a while by another mode of beneficence. He ſet aſide ſome hundreds to be lent in ſmall ſums to the poor, from five ſhillings, I think, to five pounds. He took no intereſt, and only required that, at repayment, a ſmall fee ſhould be given to the accomptant; but he required that the day of promiſed payment ſhould be exactly kept. A ſevere and punctilious temper is ill qualified for tranſactions with the poor; the day was often broken, and the loan was not repaid. This might have been eaſily foreſeen; but for this Swift had made no proviſion of patience or pity. He ordered his debtors to be ſued. A ſevere creditor has no popular character; what then was likely to be ſaid of him who employs the catchpole under the appearance of charity? The clamour againſt him was loud, and the reſentment of the populace outrageous; he was therefore

forced to drop his ſcheme, and own the folly of expecting punctuality from the poor.

His aſperity continually increaſing, condemned him to ſolitude; and his reſentment of ſolitude ſharpened his aſperity. He was not, however, totally deſerted: ſome men of learning, and ſome women of elegance, often viſited him; and he wrote from time to time either verſe or proſe; of his verſes he willingly gave copies, and is ſuppoſed to have felt no diſcontent when he ſaw them printed. His favourite maxim was *vive la bagatelle*: he thought trifles a neceſſary part of life, and perhaps found them neceſſary to himſelf. It ſeems impoſſible to him to be idle, and his diſorders made it difficult or dangerous to be long ſeriouſly ſtudious, or laborioufly diligent. The love of eaſe is always gaining upon age, and he had one temptation to petty amuſements peculiar to himſelf; whatever he did, he was ſure to hear applauded; and ſuch was his predominance over all that approached, that all their applauſes were probably ſincere. He that is much flattered, ſoon learns to flatter himſelf; we are commonly taught our duty by fear or ſhame, and how can they act upon the man who hears nothing but his own praiſes?

As his years increaſed, his fits of giddineſs and deafneſs grew more frequent, and his deafneſs made converſation difficult; they grew likewiſe more ſevere, till in 1736, as he was writing a poem called *The Legion Club*, he was ſeized with a fit ſo painful, and ſo long continued, that he never after thought it proper to attempt any work of thought or labour.

He was always careful of his money, and was therefore no liberal entertainer; but was leſs frugal of his wine than of his meat. When his friends of either ſex came to him, in expectation of a dinner, his cuſtom was to give every one a ſhilling, that they might pleaſe themſelves with their proviſion. At laſt his avarice grew too powerful for his kindneſs; he would refuſe a bottle of wine, and in Ireland no man viſits where he cannot drink.

Having thus excluded converſation, and deſiſted from ſtudy, he had neither buſineſs nor amuſement; for having, by ſome ridiculous reſolution or mad vow, determined never to wear ſpectacles, he could make little uſe of books in his later years: his ideas, therefore, being neither renovated by diſcourſe, nor increaſed by reading, wore gradually

away, and left his mind vacant to the vexations of the hour, till at laſt his anger was heightened into madneſs.

He however permitted one book to be publiſhed, which had been the production of former years; *Polite Converſation*, which appeared in 1738. The *Directions for Servants* was printed ſoon after his death. Theſe two performances ſhew a mind inceſſantly attentive, and, when it was not employed upon great things, buſy with minute occurrences. It is apparent that he muſt have had the habit of noting whatever he obſerved; for ſuch a number of particulars could never have been aſſembled by the power of recollection.

He grew more violent; and his mental powers declined till (1741) it was found neceſſary that legal guardians ſhould be appointed of his perſon and fortune. He now loſt diſtinction. His madneſs was compounded of rage and fatuity. The laſt face that he knew was that of Mrs. Whiteway, and her he ceaſed to know in a little time. His meat was brought him cut into mouthfuls; but he would never touch it while the ſervant ſtaid, and at laſt, after it had ſtood perhaps an hour, would eat it walking; for he continued his old habit, and was on his feet ten hours a-day.

Next year (1742) he had an inflamation in his left eye, which ſwelled it to the ſize of an egg, with boils in other parts; he was kept long waking with the pain, and was not eaſily reſtrained by five attendants from tearing out his eye.

The tumour at laſt ſubſided; and a ſhort interval of reaſon enſuing, in which he knew his phyſician and his family, gave hopes of his recovery; but in a few days he ſunk into lethergic ſtupidity, motionleſs, heedleſs, and ſpeechleſs. But it is ſaid, that, after a year of total ſilence, when his houſekeeper, on the 30th of November, told him that the uſual bonfires and illuminations were preparing to celebrate his birthday, he anſwered, *It is all folly; they had better let it alone.*

It is remembered that he afterwards ſpoke now and then or gave ſome intimation of a meaning; but at laſt ſunk into perfect ſilence, which continued till about the end of October 1744, when, in his ſeventy-eighth year, he expired without a ſtruggle.

WHEN SWIFT is conſidered as an author, it is juſt to eſtimate his powers by their effects. In the reign of Queen Anne he turned the ſtream of popularity againſt the Whigs and muſt be confeſſed to have dictated for a time the political opinions of the Engliſh nation. In the ſucceeding reign he delivered Ireland from plunder and oppreſſion; and ſhewed that wit, confederated with truth, had ſuch force as authority was unable to reſiſt. He ſaid truly of himſelf, that Ireland *was his debtor*. It was from the time when he firſt began to patronize the Iriſh, that they may date their riches and proſperity. He taught them firſt to know their own intereſt, their weight, and their ſtrength, and gave them ſpirit to aſſert that equality with their fellow ſubjects to which they have ever ſince been making vigorous advances, and to claim thoſe rights which they have at laſt eſtabliſhed. Nor can they be charged with ingratitude to their benefactor; for they reverenced him as a guardian, and obeyed him as a dictator.

In his works, he has given very different ſpecimens both of ſentiment and expreſſion. His *Tale of a Tub* has little reſemblance to his other pieces. It exhibits a vehemence and rapidity of mind, a copiouſneſs of images, and vivacity of diction, ſuch as he afterwards never poſſeſſed, or never exerted. It is of a mode ſo diſtinct and peculiar, that it muſt be conſidered by itſelf; what is true of that, is not true of any thing elſe which he has written.

In his other works is found an equable tenour of eaſy language, which rather trickels than flows. His delight was in ſimplicity. That he has in his works no metaphor, as has been ſaid, is not true; but his few metaphors ſeem to be received rather by neceſſity than choice. He ſtudied purity; and though perhaps all his ſtrictures are not exact yet it is not often that ſoleciſms can be found; and whoever depends on his authority may generally conclude himſelf ſafe. His ſentences are never too much dilated or contracted; and it will not be eaſy to find any embarraſſment in the complication of his clauſes, any inconſequence of his connections, or abruptneſs in his tranſitions.

His ſtyle was well ſuited to his thoughts, which are never ſubtiliſed by nice diſquiſitions, decorated by ſparkling conceits, elevated by ambitious ſentences, or variegated by far-fought learning. He pays no court to the paſſions; he excites neither ſurpriſe nor admiration; he always underſtands himſelf; and his reader always underſtands him;

the peruſer of Swift wants little previous knowledge; it will be ſufficient that he is acquainted with common words and common things; he is neither required to mount elevations, nor to explore profoundities; his paſſage is always on a level, along ſolid ground, without aſperities, without obſtruction.

This eaſy and ſafe conveyance of meaning it was Swift's deſire to attain, and for having attained he deſerves praiſe, though perhaps not the higheſt praiſe. For purpoſes merely didactic, when ſomething is to be told that was known before, it is the beſt mode, but againſt that inattention by which known truths are ſuffered to lie neglected, it makes no proviſion; it inſtructs, but does not perſuade.

By his political education he was aſſociated with the Whigs; but he deſerted them when they deſerted their principles, yet without running into the contrary extreme; he continued throughout his life to retain the diſpoſition which he aſſigns to the *Church-of-England Man*, of thinking commonly with the Whigs of the State, and with the Tories of the Church.

He was a churchman rationally zealous; he deſired the proſperity, and maintained the honour of the Clergy; of the Diſſenters he did not wiſh to infringe the toleration, but he oppoſed their encroachments.

To his duty as Dean he was very attentive. He managed the revenues of his church with exact œconomy; and it is ſaid by Delany, that more money was, under his direction, laid out in repairs than had ever been in the ſame time ſince its firſt erection. Of his choir he was eminently careful; and though he neither loved nor underſtood muſic, took care that all the ſingers were well qualified, admitting none without the teſtimony of ſkilful judges.

In his church he reſtored the practice of weekly communion, and diſtributed the ſacramental elements in the moſt ſolemn and devout manner with his own hand. He came to church every morning, preached commonly in his turn, and attended the evening anthem, that it might not be negligently performed.

He read the ſervice, "rather with a ſtrong nervous voice than in a graceful manner; his voice was ſharp and high-toned, rather than harmonious."

He entered upon the clerical ſtate with hope to excell in preaching; but complained, that, from the time of his political controverſies, *he could only preach pamphlets*. This

cenſure of himſelf, if judgment be made from thoſe ſermons which have been publiſhed, was unreaſonably ſevere.

The ſuſpicions of his irreligion proceeded in a great meaſure from his dread of hypocriſy; inſtead of wiſhing to ſeem better, he delighted in ſeeming worſe than he was. He went in London to early prayers, leſt he ſhould be ſeen at church; he read prayers to his ſervants every morning with ſuch dexterous ſecrecy, that Dr. Delany was ſix months in his houſe before he knew it. He was not only careful to hide the good which he did, but willingly incurred the ſuſpicion of evil which he did not. He forgot what himſelf had formerly aſſerted, that hypocriſy is leſs miſchievous than open impiety. Dr. Delany, with all his zeal for his honour, has juſtly condemned this part of his character.

The perſon of Swift had not many recommendations. He had a kind of muddy complexion, which, though he waſhed himſelf with oriental ſcrupuloſity, did not look clear. He had a countenance ſour and ſevere, which he ſeldom ſoftened by any appearance of gaiety. He ſtubbornly reſiſted any tendency to laughter.

To his domeſtics he was naturally rough; and a man of a rigorous temper, with that vigilance of minute attention which his works diſcover, muſt have been a maſter that few could bear. That he was diſpoſed to do his ſervants good, on important occaſions, is no great mitigation; benefaction can be but rare, and tyrannic peeviſhneſs is perpetual. He did not ſpare the ſervants of others. Once, when he dined alone with the Earl of Orrery, he ſaid, of one that waited in the room, *That man has, since we sat to the table, committed fifteen faults.* What the faults were, Lord Orrery, from whom I heard the ſtory, had not been attentive enough to diſcover. My number may perhaps not be exact.

In his œconomy he practiſed a peculiar and offenſive parſimony, without diſguiſe or apology. The practice of ſaving being once neceſſary, became habitual, and grew firſt ridiculous, and at laſt deteſtable. But his avarice, though it might exclude pleaſure, was never ſuffered to encroach upon his virtue. He was frugal by inclination, but liberal by principle; and if the purpoſe to which he deſtined his little accumulations be remembered, with his diſtribution of occaſional charity, it will perhaps apppear that he liked only one mode of expence better than another, and

ſaved merely that he might have ſomething to give. He did not grow rich by injuring his ſucceſſors, but left both Laracor and the Deanery more valuable than he found them.—With all this talk of his covetouſneſs and generoſity it ſhould be remembered that he was never rich. The revenue of his Deanery was not much more than ſeven hundred a year.

His beneficence was not graced with tenderneſs or civility; he relieved without pity, and aſſiſted without kindneſs, ſo that thoſe who were fed by him could hardly love him.

He made a rule to himſelf to give but one piece at a time and therefore always ſtored his pocket with coins of different value.

Whatever he did, he ſeemed willing to do in a manner peculiar to himſelf, without ſufficiently conſidering that ſingularity, as it implies a contempt of the general practice, is a kind of defiance which juſtly provokes the hoſtility of ridicule; he therefore who indulges peculiar habits is worſe than others, if he be not better.

Of his humour, a ſtory told by Pope may afford a ſpecimen.

* "Dr. Swift has an odd, blunt way, that is miſtaken, by ſtrangers, for ill-nature.—'Tis ſo odd, that there is no deſcribing it but by facts. I'll tell you one that firſt comes into my head. One evening, Gay and I went to ſee him: you know how intimately we were all acquainted. On our coming in, 'Heyday, gentlemen (ſays the Doctor) what's the meaning of this viſit? How came you to leave all the great Lords, that you are ſo fond of, to come hither to ſee a poor Dean?'—Becauſe we would rather ſee you than any of them.—'Ay, any one that did not know ſo well as I do, might believe you. But ſince you are come, I muſt get ſome ſupper for you, I ſuppoſe.' No, Doctor, we have ſupped already.—'Supped already? that's impoſſible! why, 'tis not eight o'clock yet.—That's very ſtrange; but, if you had not ſupped, I muſt have got ſomething for you.—Let me ſee, what ſhould I have had? A couple of lobſters; ay, that would have done very well; two ſhillings—tarts, a ſhilling: but you will drink a glaſs of wine with me, though you ſupped ſo much before your uſual time only to ſpare my pocket?'—No, we had rather talk with you than drink

* *Spence.*

with you.—'But if you had ſupped with me, as in all reaſon you ought to have done, you muſt have then drunk with me.—A bottle of wine, two ſhillings—two and two is four, and one is five: juſt two-and-ſix-pence a piece. There, Pope, there's half-a-crown for you, and there's another for you, Sir; for I won't ſave any thing by you I am determined.'—This was all ſaid and done with his uſual ſeriouſneſs on ſuch occaſions; and, in ſpite of every thing we could ſay to the contrary, he actually obliged us to take the money."

In the intercourſe of familiar life, he indulged his diſpoſition to petulance and ſarcaſm, and thought himſelf injured if the licentiouſneſs of his raillery, the freedom of his cenſures, or the petulance of his frolics, was reſented or repreſſed. He predominated over his companions with very high aſcendency, and probably would bear none over whom he could not predominate. To give him advice was, in the ſtyle of his friend Delany, *to venture to speak to him.* This cuſtomary ſuperiority ſoon grew too delicate for truth; and Swift, with all his penetration, allowed himſelf to be delighted with low flattery.

On all common occaſions, he habitually affects a ſtyle of arrogance, and dictates rather than perſuades. This authoritative and magiſterial language he expected to be received as his peculiar mode of jocularity; but he apparently flattered his own arrogance by an aſſumed imperiouſneſs, in which he was ironical only to the reſentful, and to the ſubmiſſive ſufficiently ſerious.

He told ſtories with great felicity, and delighted in doing what he knew himſelf to do well. He was therefore captivated by the reſpectful ſilence of a ſteady liſtener, and told the ſame tales too often.

He did not however claim the right of talking alone; for it was his rule, when he had ſpoken a minute, to give room by a pauſe for any other ſpeaker. Of time, on all occaſions, he was an exact computer, and knew the minutes required to every common operation.

It may be juſtly ſuppoſed that there was in his converſation, what appears ſo frequently in his letters, an affectation of familiarity with the Great, an ambition of momentary equality ſought and enjoyed by the neglect of thoſe ceremonies which cuſtom has eſtabliſhed as the barriers between one order of ſociety and another. This tranſgreſſion

of regularity was by himself and his admirers termed greatneſs of ſoul. But a great mind diſdains to hold any thing by courteſy, and therefore never uſurps what a lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity, puts himſelf in his power; he is either repelled with helpleſs indignity, or endured by clemency and condeſcenſion.

Of Swift's general habits of thinking, if his Letters can be ſuppoſed to afford any evidence, he was not a man to be either loved or envied. He ſeems to have waſted life in diſcontent, by the rage of neglected pride, and the languiſhment of unſatisfied deſire. He is querulous and fastidious, arrogant and malignant; he ſcarcely ſpeaks of himſelf but with indignant lamentations, or of others but with inſolent ſuperiority when he is gay, and with angry contempt when he is gloomy. From the Letters that paſs between him and Pope it might be inferred that they, with Arbuthnot and Gay, had engroſſed all the underſtanding and virtue of mankind, that their merits filled the world; or that there was no hope of more. They ſhew the age involved in darkneſs, and ſhade the picture with ſullen emulation.

When the Queen's death drove him into Ireland, he might be allowed to regret for a time the interception of his views, the extinction of his hopes, and his ejection from gay ſcenes, important employment, and ſplendid friendſhips; but when time had enabled reaſon to prevail over vexation, the complaints, which at firſt were natural, became ridiculous becauſe they were uſeleſs. But querulouſneſs was now grown habitual, and he cried out when he probably had ceaſed to feel. His reiterated wailings perſuaded Bolingbroke that he was really willing to quit his deanery for an Engliſh pariſh; and Bolingbroke procured an exchange, which was rejected, and Swift ſtill retained the pleaſure of complaining.

The greateſt difficulty that occurs, in analyſing his character, is to diſcover by what depravity of intellect he took delight in revolving ideas, from which almoſt every other mind ſhrinks with diſguſt. The ideas of pleaſure, even when criminal, may ſolicit the imagination; but what has diſeaſe, deformity, and filth, upon which the thoughts can be allured to dwell? Delany is willing to think that Swift's mind was not much tainted with this groſs corruption be-

fore his long visit to Pope. He does not consider how he degrades his hero, by making him at fifty-nine the pupil of turpitude, and liable to the malignant influence of an ascendent mind. But the truth is, that Gulliver had described his *Yahoos* before the visit, and he that formed those images had nothing filthy to learn.

I have here given the character of Swift as he exhibits himself to my perception; but now let another be heard, who knew him better; Dr. Delany, after long acquaintance, describes him to Lord Orrery in these terms:

"My Lord, when you consider Swift's singular, peculiar, and most variegated vein of wit, always rightly intended (although not always so rightly directed) delightful in many instances, and salutary, even where it is most offensive; when you consider his strict truth, his fortitude in resisting oppression and arbitrary power; his fidelity in friendship, his sincere love and zeal for religion, his uprightness in making right resolutions, and his steadiness in adhering to them; his care of his church, its choir, its œconomy, and its income; his attention to all those that preached in his cathedral, in order to their amendment in pronunciation and style; as also his remarkable attention to the interest of his successors, preferably to his own present emoluments; invincible patriotism, even to a country which he did not love; his very various, well-divised, well-judged, and extensive charities, throughout his life, and his whole fortune (to say nothing of his wife's) conveyed to the same Christian purposes at his death; charities from which he could enjoy no honour, advantage, or satisfaction of any kind in this world. When you consider his ironical and humourous, as well as his serious schemes, for the promotion of true religion and virtue; his success in soliciting for the First Fruits and Twentieths, to the unspeakable benefit of the established Church of Ireland; and his felicity (to rate it no higher) in giving occasion to the building of fifty new Churches in London.

"All this considered, the character of his life will appear like that of his writings; they will both bear to be re-considered and re-examined with the utmost attention, and always discover new beauties and new excellences upon every examination.

"They will bear to be considered as the sun, in which the brightness will hide the blemishes; and whenever petulant ignorance, pride, malice, malignity, or envy, interpo-

ſes to cloud or ſully his fame, I will take upon me to pronounce that the eclipſe will not laſt long.

"To conclude—no man deſerved better of any country than Swift did of his. A ſteady, perſevering, inflexible friend; a wiſe, a watchful, and a faithful counſellor, under many ſevere trials and bitter perſecutions, to the manifeſt hazard both of his liberty and fortune.

"He lived a bleſſing, he died a benefactor, and his name will ever live an honour to Ireland."

IN the Poetical Works of Dr. SWIFT there is not much upon which the critic can exerciſe his powers. They are often humourous, almoſt always light, and have the qualities which recommend ſuch compoſitions, eaſineſs and gaiety. They are, for the moſt part, what their author intended. The diction is correct, the numbers are ſmooth, and the rhymes exact. There ſeldom occurs a hard laboured expreſſion, or a redundant epithet; all his verſes exemplify his own definition of a good ſtyle, they conſiſt of *proper words in proper places.*

To divide this Collection into claſſes, and ſhew how ſome pieces are groſs, and ſome are trifling, would be to tell the reader what he knows already, and to find faults of which the author could not be ignorant, who certainly wrote often not to his judgment, but his humour.

It was ſaid, in a Preface to one of the Iriſh editions, that Swift had never been known to take a ſingle thought from any writer, ancient or modern. This is not literally true; but perhaps no writer can eaſily be found that has borrowed ſo little, or that in all his excellences and all his defects has ſo well maintained his claim to be conſidered as original.

BROOME.

WILLIAM BROOME was born in Cheſhire, as is ſaid, of very mean parents. Of the place of his birth, or the firſt part of his life, I have not been able to gain any intelligence. He was educated upon the foundation at Eaton, and was captain of the ſchool a whole year, without any vacancy, by which he might have obtained a ſcholarſhip at King's College. Being by this delay, ſuch as is ſaid to have happened very rarely, ſuperannuated, he was ſent to St. John's College by the contributions of his friends, where he obtained a ſmall exhibition.

At his college he lived for ſome time in the ſame chamber with the well-known Ford, by whom I have formerly heard him deſcribed as a contracted ſcholar and a mere verſifyer, unacquainted with life, and unſkilful in converſation. His addiction to metre was then ſuch, that his companions familiarly called him *Poet*. When he had opportunities of mingling with mankind, he cleared himſelf, as Ford likewiſe owned, from great part of his ſcholaſtic ruſt.

He appeared early in the world as a tranſlator of the *Iliads* into proſe, in conjunction with Ozell and Oldiſworth. How their ſeveral parts were diſtributed is not known. This is the tranſlation of which Ozell boaſted as ſuperior, in Toland's opinion, to that of Pope: it has long ſince vaniſhed, and is now in no danger from the critics.

He was introduced to Mr. Pope, who was then viſiting Sir John Cotton at Madingley near Cambridge, and gained ſo much of his eſteem, that he was employed, I believe to make extracts from Euſtathius for the notes to the tranſlation of the *Iliad;* and in the volumes of poetry publiſhed by Lintot, commonly called *Pope's Miscellanies*, many of his early pieces were inſerted.

Pope and Broome were to be yet more cloſely connected. When the ſucceſs of the *Iliad* gave encouragement to a verſion of the *Odyssey*, Pope, weary of the toil, called Fenton and Broome to his aſſiſtance; and, taking only

half the work upon himſelf, divided the other half between his partners, giving four books to Fenton, and eight to Broome. Fenton's books I have enumerated in his Life; to the lot of Broome fell the ſecond, ſixth, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, ſixteenth, eighteenth, and twenty-third, together with the burthen of writing all the notes.

As this tranſlation is a very important event in poetical hiſtory, the reader has a right to know upon what grounds I eſtabliſh my narration. That the verſion was not wholly Pope's, was always known: he had mentioned the aſſiſtance of two friends in his propoſals, and at the end of the work ſome account is given by Broome of their different parts, which however mentions only five books as written by the coadjutors; the fourth and twentieth by Fenton; the ſixth, the eleventh, and the eighteenth by himſelf; though Pope, in an advertiſement prefixed afterwards to a new volume of his works, claimed only twelve. A natural curioſity, after the real conduct of ſo great an undertaking, incited me once to enquire of Dr. Warburton, who told me, in his warm language, that he thought the relation given in the note *a lie;* but that he was not able to aſcertain the ſeveral ſhares. The intelligence which Dr. Warburton could not afford me, I obtained from Mr. Langton, to whom Mr. Spence had imparted it.

The price at which Pope purchaſed this aſſiſtance was three hundred pounds paid to Fenton, and five hundred to Broome, with as many copies as he wanted for his friends, which amounted to one hundred more. The payment made to Fenton I know but by hearſay; Broome's is very diſtinctly told by Pope, in the notes to the Dunciad.

It is evident, that, according to Pope's own eſtimate, Broome was unkindly treated. If four books could merit three hundred pounds, eight and all the notes, equivalent at leaſt to four, had certainly a right to more than ſix.

Broome probably conſidered himſelf as injured, and there was for ſome time more than coldneſs between him and his employer. He always ſpoke of Pope as too much a lover of money, and Pope purſued him with avowed hoſtility; for he not only named him diſreſpectfully in the *Dunciad*, but quoted him more than once in the *Bathos*, as a proficient in the *Art of Sinking;* and in his enumeration of the different kinds of poets diſtinguiſhed for the profound, he reckons Broome among *the* Parrots *who repeat another's words in ſuch a hoarſe odd tone as makes them ſeem*

their own. I have been told that they were afterwards reconciled; but I am afraid their peace was without friendſhip.

He afterwards publiſhed a Miſcellany of Poems, which is inſerted, with corrections, in the late compilation.

He never roſe to very high dignity in the church. He was ſome time rector of Sturſton in Suffolk, where he married a wealthy widow; and afterwards, when the King viſited Cambridge (1728), became Doctor of Laws. He was (in Auguſt 1728) preſented by the Crown to the rectory of *Pulham* in *Norfolk*, which he held with *Oakley Magna* in *Suffolk*, given him by the Lord Cornwallis, to whom he was chaplain, and who added the vicarage of *Eye* in *Suffolk*; he then reſigned *Pulham*, and retained the other two.

Towards the cloſe of his life he grew again poetical, and amuſed himſelf with tranſlating Odes of Anacreon, which he publiſhed in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, under the name of *Chester*.

He died at Bath, November 16, 1745, and was buried in the Abbey Church.

Of Broome, though it cannot be ſaid that he was a great poet, it would be unjuſt to deny that he was an excellent verſifyer; his lines are ſmooth and ſonorous, and his diction is ſelect and elegant. His rhymes are ſometimes unſuitable; in his *Melancholy* he makes *breath* rhyme to *birth* in one place, and to *earth* in another. Thoſe faults occur but ſeldom; and he had ſuch power of words and numbers as fitted him for tranſlation; but, in his original works, recollection ſeems to have been his buſineſs more than invention. His imitations are ſo apparent, that it is part of his reader's employment to recal the verſes of ſome former poet. Sometimes he copies the moſt popular writers, for he ſeems ſcarcely to endeavour at concealment; and ſometimes he picks up fragments in obſcure corners. His lines to Fenton,

> Serene, the ſting of pain thy thoughts beguile,
> And make afflictions objects of a ſmile;

brought to my mind ſome lines on the death of Queen Mary, written by Barnes, of whom I ſhould not have expected to find an imitator;

But thou, O Muſe, whoſe ſweet nepenthean tongue
Can charm the pangs of death with deathleſs ſong;
Canſt *ſtinging plagues* with eaſy *thoughts beguile*,
Make pains and tortures *objects of a ſmile.*

To detect his imitations were tedious and uſeleſs. What he takes he ſeldom makes worſe; and he cannot be juſtly thought a mean man whom Pope choſe for an aſſociate, and whoſe co-operation was conſidered by Pope's enemies as ſo important, that he was attacked by Henley with this ludicrous diſtich:

Pope came off clean with Homer; but they ſay
Broome went before and kindly ſwept the way.

POPE.

ALEXANDER POPE was born in London, May 22, 1688, of parents whoſe rank or ſtation was never aſcertained: we are informed that they were of *gentle blood;* that his father was of a family of which the Earl of Downe was the head, and that his mother was the daughter of William Turner, Eſquire, of York, who had likewiſe three ſons, one of whom had the honour of being killed, and the other of dying, in the ſervice of Charles the Firſt; the third was made a general officer in Spain, from whom the ſiſter inherited what ſequeſtrations and forfeitures had left in the family.

This, and this only, is told by Pope; who is more willing, as I have heard obſerved, to ſhew what his father was not, than what he was. It is allowed that he grew rich by trade; but whether in a ſhop or on the Exchange was never diſcovered, till Mr. Tyers told, on the authority of Mrs. Racket, that he was a linen draper in the Strand. Both parents were papiſts.

Pope was from his birth of a conſtitution tender and delicate; but is ſaid to have ſhewn remarkable gentleneſs and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition. The weakneſs of his body continued through his life, but the mildneſs of his mind perhaps ended with his childhood. His voice, when he was young, was ſo pleaſing, that he was called in fondneſs the *little Nightingale.*

Being not ſent early to ſchool, he was taught to read by an aunt; and when he was ſeven or eight years old, became a lover of books. He firſt learned to write by imitating printed books; a ſpecies of penmanſhip in which he retained great excellence through his whole life, though his ordinary hand was not elegant.

When he was about eight, he was placed in Hampſhire under Taverner, a Romiſh prieſt, who, by a method very rarely practiſed, taught him the Greek and Latin rudiments

together. He was now firſt regularly initiated in poetry by the peruſal of Ogylby's *Homer*, and Sandys's *Ovid*: Ogylby's aſſiſtance he never repaid with any praiſe; but of Sandys he declared, in his notes to the *Iliad*, that Engliſh poetry owed much of its preſent beauty to his tranſlations. Sandys very rarely attempted original compoſition.

From the care of Taverner, under whom his proficiency was conſiderable, he was removed to a ſchool at Twyford near Wincheſter, and again to another ſchool about Hyde-park Corner; from which he uſed ſometimes to ſtroll to the play-houſe, and was ſo delighted with theatrical exhibitions, that he formed a kind of play from Ogylby's *Iliad*, with ſome verſes of his own intermixed, which he perſuaded his ſchool-fellows to act, with the addition of his maſter's gardener, who perſonated *Ajax*.

At the two laſt ſchools he uſed to repreſent himſelf as having loſt part of what Taverner had taught him, and on his maſter at Twyford he had already exerciſed his poetry in a lampoon. Yet under thoſe maſters he tranſlated more than a fourth part of the *Metamorphoses*. If he kept the ſame proportion in his other exerciſes, it cannot be thought that his loſs was great.

He tells of himſelf, in his poems, that *he liſp'd in numbers:* and uſed to ſay that he could not remember the time when he began to make verſes. In the ſtyle of fiction it might have been ſaid of him as of Pinder, that when he lay in his cradle, *the bees swarmed about his mouth.*

About the time of the revolution his father, who was undoubtedly diſappointed by the ſudden blaſt of popiſh proſperity, quitted his trade, and retired to Binfield in Windſor Foreſt, with about twenty thouſand pounds; for which, being conſcientiouſly determined not to entruſt it to the government, he found no better uſe than that of locking it up in a cheſt, and taking from it what his expences required; and his life was long enough to conſume a great part of it, before his ſon came to the inheritance.

To Binfield Pope was called by his father when he was about twelve years old; and there he had for a few months the aſſiſtance of one Deane, another prieſt, of whom he learned only to conſtrue a little of *Tully's Offices*. How Mr. Deane could ſpend, with a boy who had tranſlated ſo much of *Ovid*, ſome months over a ſmall part of *Tully's Offices*, it is now vain to enquire.

Of a youth ſo ſucceſsfully employed, and ſo conſpicuouſly improved, a minute account muſt be naturally deſired; but curioſity muſt be contented with confuſed, imperfect, and ſometimes improbable intelligence. Pope, finding little advantage from external help, reſolved thenceforward to direct himſelf, and at twelve formed a plan of ſtudy which he completed with little other incitement than the deſire of excellence.

His primary and principal purpoſe was to be a poet, with which his father accidentally concurred, by propoſing ſubjects, and obliging him to correct his performances by many reviſals; after which the old gentleman, when he was ſatisfied, would ſay, *these are good rhymes.*

In his peruſal of the Engliſh poets he ſoon diſtinguiſhed the verſification of Dryden, which he conſidered as the model to be ſtudied, and was impreſſed with ſuch veneration for his inſtructor, that he perſuaded ſome friends to take him to the coffee-houſe which Dryden frequented, and pleaſed himſelf with having ſeen him.

Dryden died May 1, 1701, ſome days before Pope was twelve; ſo early muſt he therefore have felt the power of harmony, and the zeal of genius. Who does not wiſh that Dryden could have known the value of the homage that was paid him, and foreſeen the greatneſs of his young admirer?

The earlieſt of Pope's productions is his *Ode on Solitude*, written before he was twelve, in which there is nothing more than other forward boys have attained, and which is not equal to Cowley's performances at the ſame age.

His time was now ſpent wholly in reading and writing. As he read the Claſſics, he amuſed himſelf with tranſlating them; and at fourteen made a verſion of the firſt book of the *Thebais*, which, with ſome reviſion, he afterwards publiſhed. He muſt have been at this time, if he had no help, a conſiderable proficient in the Latin tongue.

By Dryden's Fables, which had then been not long publiſhed, and were much in the hands of poetical readers, he was tempted to try his own ſkill in giving Chaucer a more faſhionable appearance, and put *January and May*, and the *Prologue of the Wife of Bath*, into Modern Engliſh. He tranſlated likewiſe the Epiſtle of *Sappho to Phaon* from Ovid, to complete the verſion, which was before imperfect; and wrote ſome other ſmall pieces, which he afterwards printed.

He ſometimes imitated the Engliſh poets, and profeſſed to have written at fourteen his poem upon *Silence*, after Rocheſter's *Nothing*. He had now formed his verſification, and in the ſmoothneſs of his numbers ſurpaſſed his original; but this is a ſmall part of his praiſe; he diſcovers ſuch acquaintance both with human life and public affairs, as is not eaſily conceived to have been attainable by a boy of fourteen in *Windsor Forrest*.

Next year he was deſirous of opening to himſelf new ſources of knowledge, by making himſelf acquainted with modern languages; and removed for a time to London, that he might ſtudy French and Italian, which as he deſired nothing more than to read them, were by diligent application ſoon diſpatched. Of Italian learning he does not appear to have ever made much uſe in his ſubſequent ſtudies.

He then returned to Binfield, and delighted himſelf with his own poetry. He tried all ſtyles and many ſubjects. He wrote a comedy, a tragedy, an epic poem, with panegyrics on all the princes of Europe; and, as he confeſſes, *thought himself the greatest genius that ever was*. Self-confidence is the firſt requiſite to great undertakings; he, indeed, who forms his opinion of himſelf in ſolitude, without knowing the powers of other men, is very liable to error; but it was the felicity of Pope to rate himſelf at his real value.

Moſt of his puerile productions were, by his maturer judgment, afterwards deſtroyed; *Alcander*, the epic poem, was burnt by the perſuaſion of Atterbury. The tragedy was founded on the legend of *St. Genevieve*. Of the comedy there is no account.

Concerning his ſtudies it is related, that he tranſlated Tully *on old Age*; and that, beſides his books of poetry and criticiſm, he read *Temple's Essays* and *Locke on Human Understanding*. His reading, though his favourite authors are not known, appears to have been ſufficiently extenſive and multifarious; for his early pieces ſhew, with ſufficient evidence, his knowledge of books.

He that is pleaſed with himſelf, eaſily imagines that he ſhall pleaſe others. Sir William Trumbal, who had been ambaſſador to Conſtantinople, and ſecretary of ſtate, when he retired from buſineſs, fixed his reſidence in the neighbourhood of Binfield. Pope, not yet ſixteen, was introduced to the ſtateſman of ſixty, and ſo diſtinguiſhed himſelf, that their interviews ended in friendſhip and correſpondence. Pope was, through his whole life, ambitious of

ſplendid acquaintance, and he ſeems to have wanted neither diligence nor ſucceſs in attracting the notice of the great; for from his firſt entrance into the world, and his entrance was very early, he was admitted to familiarity with thoſe whoſe rank or ſtation made them moſt conſpicuous.

From the age of ſixteen the life of Pope, as an author, may be properly computed. He now wrote his paſtorals, which were ſhewn to the Poets and Critics of that time; as they well deſerved, they were read with admiration, and many praiſes were beſtowed upon them and upon the Preface, which is both elegant and learned in a high degree: they were, however, not publiſhed till five years afterwards.

Cowley, Milton, and Pope, are diſtinguiſhed among the Engliſh poets by the early exertion of their powers; but the works of Cowley alone were publiſhed in his childhood, and therefore of him only can it be certain that his puerile performances received no improvement from his maturer ſtudies.

At this time he began his acquaintance with Wycherley a man who ſeems to have had among his contemporaries his full ſhare of reputation, to have been eſteemed without virtue, and carreſſed without good-humour. Pope was proud of his notice; Wycherley wrote verſes in his praiſe, which he was charged by Dennis with writing to himſelf, and they agreed for a while to flatter one another. It is pleaſant to remark how ſoon Pope learned the cant of an author, and began to treat critics with contempt, though he had yet ſuffered nothing from them.

But the fondneſs of Wycherley was too violent to laſt. His eſteem of Pope was ſuch, that he ſubmitted ſome poems to his reviſion; and when Pope, perhaps proud of ſuch confidence, was ſufficiently bold in his criticiſms, and liberal in his alterations, the old ſcribler was angry to ſee his pages defaced, and felt more pain from the detection than content from the amendment of his faults. They parted; but Pope always conſidered him with kindneſs, and viſited him a little time before he died.

Another of his early correſpondents was Mr. Cromwell, of whom I have learned nothing particular but that he uſed to ride a-hunting in a tye-wig. He was fond and perhaps vain, of amuſing himſelf with poetry and criticiſm; and ſometimes ſent his performances to Pope, who did not for-

bear ſuch remarks as were now-and then unwelcome. Pope, in his turn, put the juvenile verſion of *Statius* into his hands for correction.

Their correſpondence afforded the public its firſt knowledge of Pope's Epiſtolary Powers; for his Letters were given by Cromwell to one Mrs. Thomas, and ihe many years afterwards ſold them to Curll, who inſerted them in a volume of his Miſcellanies.

Walſh, a name yet preſerved among the minor poets, was one of his firſt encouragers. His regard was gained by the Paſtorals, and from him Pope received the council by which he ſeems to have regulated his ſtudies. Walſh adviſed him to correctneſs, which, as he told him, the Engliſh poets had hitherto neglected, and which therefore was left to him as a baſis of fame; and, being delighted with rural poems, recommended to him to write a paſtoral comedy, like thoſe which are read ſo eagerly in Italy; a deſign which Pope probably did not approve, as he did not follow it.

Pope had now declared himſelf a poet; and, thinking himſelf intitled to poetical converſation, began at ſeventeen to frequent Will's, a coffee-houſe on the north ſide of Ruſſel-ſtreet in Covent-garden, where the wits of that time uſed to aſſemble, and where Dryden had, when he lived, been accuſtomed to preſide.

During this period of his life he was indefatigably diligent, and inſatiably curious; wanting health for violent, and money for expenſive pleaſures, and having certainly excited in himſelf very ſtrong deſires of intellectual eminence, he ſpent much of his time over his books; but he read only to ſtore his mind with facts and images, ſeizing all that his authors preſented with undiſtinguiſhing voracity, and with an appetite for knowledge too eager to be nice. In a mind like his, however, all the faculties were at once involuntarily improving. Judgment is forced upon us by experience. He that reads many books muſt compare one opinion or one ſtyle with another; and when he compares, muſt neceſſarily diſtinguiſh, reject, and prefer. But the account given by himſelf of his ſtudies was, that from fourteen to twenty he read only for amuſement, from twenty to twenty-ſeven for improvement and inſtruction; that in the firſt part of this time he deſired only to know, and in the ſecond he endeavoured to judge.

The Paſtorals, which had been for ſome time handed about among poets and critics, were at laſt printed (1709) in Tonſon's Miſcellany, in a volume which began with the Paſtorals of Philips, and ended with thoſe of Pope.

The ſame year was written the *Eſſay on Criticism*; a work which diſplays ſuch extent of comprehenſion, ſuch nicety of diſtinction, ſuch acquaintance with mankind, and ſuch knowledge both of ancient and modern language, as are not often attained by the matureſt age and longeſt experience. It was publiſhed about two years afterwards, and being praiſed by Addiſon in the *Spectator* with ſufficient liberality, met with ſo much favour as enraged Dennis, "who," he ſays, "found himſelf attacked, without any manner of provocation on his ſide, and attacked in his perſon, inſtead of his writings, by one who was wholly a ſtranger to him, at a time when all the world knew he was perſecuted by fortune; and not only ſaw that this was attempted in a clandeſtine manner, with the utmoſt falſehood and calumny, but found that all this was done by a little affected hypocrite, who had nothing in his mouth at the ſame time but truth, candour, friendſhip, good-nature, humanity, and magnanimity."

How the attack is clandeſtine is not eaſily perceived, nor how his perſon is depreciated; but he ſeems to have known ſomething of Pope's character, in whom may be diſcovered an appetite to talk too frequently of his own virtues.

The pamphlet is ſuch as rage might be expected to dictate. He ſuppoſes himſelf to be aſked two queſtions; whether the Eſſay will ſucceed, and who or what is the author.

Its ſucceſs he admits to be ſecured by the falſe opinions then prevalent; the author he concludes to be *young and raw*.

"Firſt, becauſe he diſcovers a ſufficiency beyond his little ability, and hath raſhly undertaken a taſk infinitely above his force. Secondly, while this little author ſtruts, and affects the dictatorian air, he plainly ſhews that at the ſame time he is under the rod; and while he pretends to give law to others, is a pedantic ſlave to authority and opinion. Thirdly, he hath, like ſchool-boys, borrowed both from living and dead. Fourthly, he knows not his own mind, and frequently contradicts himſelf. Fifthly, he is almoſt perpetually in the wrong."

All theſe poſitions he attempts to prove by quotations and remarks; but his deſire to do miſchief is greater than his power. He has, however, juſtly criticiſed ſome paſſages, in theſe lines.

> There are whom heaven has bleſs'd with ſtore of wit,
> Yet want as much again to manage it;
> For wit and judgment ever are at ſtrife——

It is apparent that *wit* has two meanings, and that what is wanted, though called *wit*, is truly judgment. So far Dennis is undoubtedly right; but, not content with argument, he will have a little mirth, and triumphs over the firſt couplet in terms too elegant to be forgotten. "By the way, what rare numbers are here! Would not one ſwear that this youngſter had eſpouſed ſome antiquated Muſe, who had ſued out a divorce on account of impotence from ſome ſuperannuated ſinner; and, having been p—xed by her formed ſpouſe, has got the gout in her decrepit age, which makes her hobble ſo damnably." This was the man who would reform a nation ſinking into barbarity.

In another place Pope himſelf allowed that Dennis had detected one of thoſe blunders which are called *bulls*. The firſt edition had this line:

> What is this wit—
> Where wanted, ſcorn'd; and envied where acquir'd?

"How," ſays the critic, "can wit be *scorn'd* where it is not? Is not this a figure frequently employed in Hibernian land? The perſon that wants this wit may indeed be ſcorned, but the ſcorn ſhows the honour which the contemner has for wit." Of this remark Pope made the proper uſe, by correcting the paſſage.

I have preſerved, I think, all that is reaſonable in Dennis's criticiſm; it remains that juſtice be done to his delicacy. "For his acquaintance (ſays Dennis) he names Mr. Walſh, who had by no means the qualification which this author reckons abſolutely neceſſary to a critic, it being very certain that he was, like this Eſſayer, a very indifferent poet; he loved to be well-dreſſed; and I remember a little young gentleman whom Mr. Walſh uſed to take into his company, as a double foil to his perſon and capacity.—Enquire between *Sunninghill* and *Oakingham* for a young, ſhort, ſquab gentleman, the very bow of the God of Love,

and tell me whether he be a proper author to make perſonal reflections?——He may extol the ancients, but he has reaſon to thank the gods that he was born a modern; for had he been born of Grecian parents, and his father conſequently had by law had the abſolute diſpoſal of him, his life had been no longer than that of one of his poems, the life of half a day.—Let the perſon of a gentleman of his parts be never ſo contemptible, his inward man is ten times more ridiculous; it being impoſſible that his outward form, though it be that of downright monkey, ſhould differ ſo much from human ſhape, as his unthinking immaterial part does from human underſtanding." Thus began the hoſtility between Pope and Dennis, which, though it was ſuſpended for a ſhort time, never was appeaſed. Pope ſeems, at firſt, to have attacked him wantonly; but though he always profeſſed to deſpiſe him, he diſcovers, by mentioning him very often, that he felt his force or his venom.

Of this Eſſay Pope declared that he did not expect the ſale to be quick, becauſe *not one gentleman in sixty, even of liberal education, could understand it.* The gentlemen, and the education of that time, ſeem to have been of a lower character than they are of this. He mentioned a thouſand copies as a numerous impreſſion.

Dennis was not his only cenſurer; the zealous papiſts thought the monks treated with too much contempt, and Eraſmus too ſtudiouſly praiſed; but to theſe objections he had not much regard.

The *Essay* has been tranſlated into French by *Hamilton*, author of the *Comte de Grammont*, whoſe verſion was never printed, by *Robotham*, ſecretary to the King for Hanover, and by *Resnel;* and commented by Dr. Warburton, who has diſcovered in it ſuch order and connection as was not perceived by Addiſon, nor, as is ſaid, intended by the author.

Almoſt every poem, conſiſting of precepts, is ſo far arbitrary and immethodical, that many of the paragraphs may change places with no apparent inconvenience; for of two or more poſitions, depending upon ſome remote and general principle, there is ſeldom any cogent reaſon why one ſhould precede the other. But for the order in which they ſtand, whatever it be, a little ingenuity may eaſily give a reaſon. *It is possible*, Says Hooker, *that by long circumduction, from any one truth all truth may be inferred.*

Of all homogeneous truths at leaſt, of all truths reſpecting the ſame general end, in whatever ſeries they may be produced, a concatenation by intermediate ideas may be formed, ſuch as, when it is once ſhewn, ſhall appear natural: but if this order be reverſed, another mode of connection equally ſpecious may be found or made. Ariſtotle is praiſed for naming Fortitude firſt of the cardinal virtues, as that without which no other virtue can ſteadily be practiſed; but he might, with equal propriety, have placed Prudence and Juſtice before it, ſince without Prudence Fortitude is mad; without Juſtice, it is miſchievous.

As the end of method is perſpicuity, that ſeries is ſufficiently regular that avoids obſcurity; and where there is no obſcurity it will not be difficult to diſcover method.

In the *Spectator* was publiſhed the *Messiah*, which he firſt ſubmitted to the peruſal of Steele, and corrected in compliance with his criticiſms.

It is reaſonable to infer, from his Letters, that the verſes on the *Unfortunate Lady* were written about the time when his *Essay* was publiſhed. The Lady's name and adventures I have ſought with fruitleſs enquiry.

I can therefore tell no more than I have learned from Mr. Ruffhead, who writes with the confidence of one who could truſt his information. She was a woman of eminent rank and large fortune, the ward of an uncle, who, having given her a proper education, expected like other guardians that ſhe ſhould make at leaſt an equal match; and ſuch he propoſed to her, but found it rejected in favour of a young gentleman of inferior condition.

Having diſcovered the correſpondence between the two lovers, and finding the young lady determined to abide by her own choice, he ſuppoſed that ſeparation might do what can rarely be done by arguments, and ſent her into a foreign country, where ſhe was obliged to converſe only with thoſe from whom her uncle had nothing to fear.

Her lover took care to repeat his vows; but his letters were intercepted and carried to her guardian, who directed her to be watched with ſtill greater vigilance; till of this reſtraint ſhe grew ſo impatient, that ſhe bribed a woman-ſervant to procure her a ſword, which ſhe directed to her heart.

From this account, given with evident intention to raiſe the Lady's character, it does not appear that ſhe had any

claim to praiſe, nor much to compaſſion. She ſeems to have been impatient, violent, and ungovernable. Her uncle's power could not have laſted long; the hour of liberty and choice would have come in time. But her deſires were too hot for delay, and ſhe liked ſelf-murder better than ſuſpence.

Nor is it diſcovered that the uncle, whoever he was, is with much juſtice delivered to poſterity as a *falſe Guardian*; he ſeems to have done only that for which a guardian is appointed; he endeavoured to direct his niece till ſhe ſhould be able to direct herſelf. Poetry has not often been worſe employed than in dignifying the amorous fury of a raving girl.

Not long after, he wrote the *Rape of the Lock*, the moſt airy, the moſt ingenious, and the moſt delightful of all his compoſitions, occaſioned by a frolic of gallantry, rather too familiar, in which Lord Petre cut of a lock of Mrs. Arabella Fermor's hair. This, whether ſtealth or violence, was ſo much reſented, that the commerce of the two families, before very friendly, was interrupted. Mr. Caryl, a gentleman, who being ſecretary to King Jame's Queen, had followed his Miſtreſs into France, and who being the author of *Sir Solomon Single*, a comedy, and ſome tranſlations, was entitled to the notice of a Wit, ſolicited Pope to endeavour a reconciliation by a ludicrous poem, which might bring both the parties to a better temper. In compliance with Caryl's requeſt, though his name was for a long time marked only by the firſt and laſt letter, C——l, a poem of two cantos was written (1711) as is ſaid, in a fortnight, and ſent to the offended Lady, who liked it well enough to ſhew it; and, with the uſual proceſs of literary tranſactions the author, dreading a ſurreptitious edition, was forced to publiſh it.

The event is ſaid to have been ſuch as was deſired; the pacification and diverſion of all to whom it related, except Sir *George Brown*, who complained with ſome bitterneſs that, in the character of *Sir Plume*, he was made to talk nonſenſe. Whether all this be true, I have ſome doubt; for at Paris, a few years ago, a niece of Mrs. Fermor, who preſided in an Engliſh Convent, mentioned Pope's work with very little gratitude, rather as an inſult than an honour; and ſhe may be ſuppoſed to have inherited the opinion of her family.

At its firſt appearance it was termed by Addiſon *merum ſal*. Pope, however, ſaw that it was capable of improve-

ment ; and having luckily contrived to borrow his machinery from the *Rosicrucians*, imparted the ſcheme with which his head was teeming to Addiſon, who told him that his work, as it ſtood, was *a delicious little thing*, and gave him no encouragement to retouch it

This has been too haſtily conſidered as an inſtance of Addiſon's jealouſy ; for as he could not gueſs the conduct of the new deſign, or the poſſibilities of pleaſure compriſed in a fiction of which there had been no examples, he might very reaſonably and kindly perſuade the author to acquieſce in his own proſperity, and forbear an attempt which he conſidered as an unneceſſary hazard.

Addiſon's counſel was happily rejected. Pope foreſaw the future efflorescence of imagery then budding in his mind, and reſolved to ſpare no art, or induſtry of cultivation. The ſoft luxuriance of his fancy was already ſhooting, and all the gay varieties of diction were ready at his hand to colour and embelliſh it.

His attempt was juſtified by its ſucceſs. The *Rape of the Lock* ſtands forward, in the claſſes of literature, as the moſt exquiſite example of ludicrous poetry. Berkeley congratulated him upon the diſplay of powers more truly poetical than he had ſhewn before ; with elegance of deſcription and juſtneſs of precepts, he had now exhibited boundleſs fertility of invention.

He always conſidered the intermixture of the machinery with the action as his moſt ſucceſsful exertion of poetical art. He indeed could never afterwards produce any thing of ſuch unexampled excellence. Thoſe performances, which ſtrike with wonder, are combinations of ſkilful genius with happy caſuality ; and it is not likely that any felicity like the diſcovery of a new race of preternatural agents, ſhould happen twice to the ſame man.

Of this poem the author was, I think, allowed to enjoy the praiſe for a long time without diſturbance. Many years afterwards Dennis publiſhed ſome remarks upon it, with very little force, and with no effect ; for the opinion of the public was already ſettled, and it was no longer at the mercy of criticiſm.

About this time he publiſhed the *Temple of Fame*, which, as he tells Steele in their correſpondence, he had written two years before ; that is, when he was only twenty-two years old, an early time of life for ſo much learning and ſo much obſervation as that work exhibits.

On this poem Dennis afterwards publiſhed ſome remarks of which the moſt reaſonable is, that ſome of the lines repreſent *motion* as exhibited by *ſculpture*.

Of the Epiſtle from *Eloiſa to Abelard*, I do not know the date. His firſt inclination to attempt a compoſition of that tender kind aroſe, as Mr. Savage told me, from his peruſal of Prior's *Nut-brown Maid*. How much he has ſurpaſſed Prior's work it is not neceſſary to mention, when perhaps it may be ſaid with juſtice, that he has excelled every compoſition of the ſame kind. The mixture of religious hope and reſignation gives an elevation and dignity to diſappointed love, which images merely natural cannot beſtow. The gloom of a convent ſtrikes the imagination with far greater force than the ſolitude of a grove.

This piece was, however, not much his favourite in his latter years, though I never heard upon what principle he ſlighted it.

In the next year (1713) he publiſhed *Windſor Forest*; of which part was, as he relates, written at ſixteen, about the ſame time as his Paſtorals, and the latter part was added afterwards: where the addition begins, we are not told. The lines relating to the Peace confeſs their own date. It is dedicated to Lord Lanſdowne, who was then high in reputation and influence among the Tories; and it is ſaid that the concluſion of the poem gave great pain to Addiſon, both as a poet and a politician. Reports like this are often ſpread with boldneſs very diſproportionate to their evidence. Why ſhould Addiſon receive any particular diſturbance from the laſt lines of *Windſor Forrest*; If contrariety of opinion could poiſon a politician, he would not live a day; and, as a poet, he muſt have felt Pope's force of genius much more from many other parts of his works.

The pain that Addiſon might feel it is not likely that he would confeſs; and it is certain that he ſo well ſuppreſſed his diſcontent, that Pope now thought himſelf his favourite; for having been conſulted in the reviſal of *Cato* he introduced it by a Prologue; and, when Dennis publiſhed his remarks, undertook not indeed to vindicate but to revenge his friend, by a *Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis*.

There is reaſon to believe that Addiſon gave no encouragement to this diſingenious hoſtility; for, ſays Pope, in a Letter to him, "indeed your opinion, that 'tis entirely to be neglected, would be my own in my own caſe; but I felt more warmth here than I did when I firſt ſaw his book

againſt myſelf (though indeed in two minutes it made me heartily merry)." Addiſon was not a man on whom ſuch cant of ſenſibility could make much impaeſſion. He left the pamphlet to itſelf, having diſowned it to Dennis, and perhaps did not think Pope to have deſerved much by his officiouſneſs.

This year was printed in the *Guardian* the ironical compariſon between the Paſtorals of Philips and Pope; a compoſition of artifice, criticiſm, and literature, to which nothing equal will eaſily be found. The ſuperiority of Pope is ſo ingeniouſly diſſembled, and the feeble lines of Philips ſo ſkilfully preferred, that Steele, being deceived, was unwilling to print the paper leſt Pope ſhould be offended. Addiſon immediately ſaw the writer's deſign; and as it ſeems, had malice enough to conceal his diſcovery, and to permit a publication which, by making his friend Philips ridiculous, made him forever an enemy to Pope.

It appears that about this time Pope had a ſtrong inclination to unite the art of Painting with that of Poetry, and put himſelf under the tuition of Jervas.

He was near-ſighted, and therefore not formed by nature for a painter: he tried however, how far he could advance, and ſometimes perſuaded his friends to ſit. A picture of Betterton, ſuppoſed to be drawn by him, was in the poſſeſſion of Lord Mansfield: if this was taken from the life, he muſt have begun to paint earlier; for Betterton was now dead. Pope's ambition of this new art produced ſome encomiaſtic verſes to Jervas, which certainly ſhew his power as a poet, but I have been told that they betray his ignorance of painting.

He appears to have regarded Betterton with kindneſs and eſteem; and after his death publiſhed, under his name a verſion into modern Engliſh of Chaucer's Prologues, and one of his Tales, which, as was related by Mr. Harte, were believed to have been written by Pope himſelf by Fenton, who made him a gay offer of five pounds, if he would ſhew them in the hand of Betterton.

The next year (1713) produced a bolder attempt, by which profit was ſought as well as praiſe. The poems which he had hitherto written, however they might have diffuſed his name, had made very little addition to his fortune. The allowance which his father made him, though, proportioned to what he had, it might be liberal, could not be large; his religion hindered him from the occupation of

any civil employment, and he complained that he wanted even money to buy books*.

He therefore reſolved to try how far the favour of the public extended, by ſoliciting a ſubſcription to a verſion of the *Iliad*, with large notes.

To print by ſubſcription was, for ſome time, a practice peculiar to the Engliſh. The firſt conſiderable work for which this expedient was employed is ſaid to have been Dryden's *Virgil*; and it had been tried again with great ſucceſs when the *Tatlers* were collected into volumes.

There was reaſon to believe that Pope's attempt would be ſucceſsful. He was in the full bloom of reputation, and was perſonally known to almoſt all whom dignity of employment or ſplendour of reputation had made eminent; he converſed indifferently with both parties, and never diſturbed the public with his political opinions: and it might be naturally expected, as each faction then boaſted its literary zeal, that the great men, who on other occaſions practiſed all the violence of oppoſition, would emulate each other in their encouragement of a poet who had delighted all, and by whom none had been offended.

With thoſe hopes, he offered an Engliſh *Iliad* to ſubſcribers, in ſix volumes in quarto, for ſix guineas; a ſum, according to the value of money at that time, by no means inconſiderable, and greater than I believe to have been ever aſked before. His propoſal, however, was very favourably received, and the patrons of literature were buſy to recommend his undertaking, and promote his intereſt. Lord Oxford, indeed, lamented that ſuch a genius ſhould be waſted upon a work not original; but propoſed no means by which he might live without it: Addiſon recommended coation and moderation, and adviſed him not to be content with the praiſe of half the nation, when he might be univerſally favoured.

The greatneſs of the deſign, the popularity of the author, and the attention of the literary world, naturally raiſed ſuch expectations of the future ſale, that the bookſellers made their offers with great eagerneſs; but the higheſt bidder was *Bernard Lintot*, who became proprietor on condition of ſupplying, at his own expence, all the copies which were to be delivered to ſubſcribers, or preſented to friends, and paying two hundred pounds for every volume.

Spence. *

Of the Quartos it was, I believe, ſtipulated that none ſhould be printed but for the author, that the ſubſcription might not be depreciated; but Lintot impreſſed the ſame pages upon a ſmall Folio, and paper perhaps a little thinner; and ſold exactly at half the price, for half a guinea each volume, books ſo little inferior to the Quartos, that, by a fraud of trade, thoſe Folios, being afterwards ſhortened by cutting away the top and bottom, were ſold as copies printed for the ſubſcribers.

Lintot printed two hundred and fifty on royal paper in Folio for two guineas a volume; of the ſmall Folio, having printed ſeventeen hundred and fifty copies of the firſt volume, he reduced the number in the other volumes to a thouſand.

It is unpleaſant to relate that the bookſeller, after all his hopes and all his liberality, was, by a very unjuſt and illegal action, defrauded of his profit. An edition of the Engliſh *Iliad* was printed in Holland in Duodecimo, and imported clandeſtinely for the gratification of thoſe who were impatient to read what they could not yet afford to buy. This fraud could only be counteracted by an edition equally cheap and more commodious; and Lintot was compelled to contract his Folio at once into a Duodecimo, and looſe the advantage of an intermediate gradation. The notes, which in the Dutch copies were placed at the end of each book, as they had been in the large volumes, were now ſubjoined to the text in the ſame page, and are therefore more eaſily conſulted. Of this edition two thouſand five hundred were firſt printed, and five thouſand a few weeks afterwards; but indeed great numbers were neceſſary to produce conſiderable profit.

Pope, having now emitted his propoſals, and engaged not only his own reputation, but in ſome degree that of his friends who patroniſed his ſubſcription, began to be frighted at his own undertaking; and finding himſelf at firſt embarraſſed with difficulties, which retarded and oppreſſed him, he was for a time timorous and uneaſy; had his nights diſturbed by dreams of long journies through unknown ways, and wiſhed, as he ſaid, *that ſomebody would hang him.**

This miſery, however, was not of long continuance; he grew by degrees more acquainted with Homer's images and expreſſions, and practice increaſed his facility of verſifica-

* *Spence.*

tion. In a ſhort time he repreſents himſelf as diſpatching regularly fifty verſes a day, which would ſhew him by an eaſy computation the termination of his labour.

His own diffidence was not his only vexation. He that aſks a ſubſcription ſoon finds that he has enemies. All who do not encourage him defame him. He that wants money will rather be thought angry than poor, and he that wiſhes to ſave his money conceals his avarice by his malice. Addiſon had hinted his ſuſpicion that Pope was too much a Tory; and ſome of the Tories ſuſpected his principles becauſe he had contributed to the *Guardian*, which was carried on by *Steele*.

To thoſe who cenſured his politics were added enemies yet more dangerous, who called in queſtion his knowledge of Greek, and his qualifications for a tranſlator of Homer. To theſe he made no public oppoſition; but in one of his Letters eſcapes from them as well as he can. At an age like his, for he was not more than twenty-five, with an irregular education, and a courſe of life of which much ſeems to have paſſed in converſation, it is not very likely that he overflowed with Greek. But when he felt himſelf deficient he ſought aſſiſtance; and what man of learning would refuſe to help him? Minute enquiries into the force of words are leſs neceſſary in tranſlating Homer than other poets, becauſe his poſitions are general, and his repreſentations natural, with very little dependence on local or temporary cuſtoms, on thoſe changeable ſcenes of artificial life, which by mingling original with accidental notions, and crowding the mind with images which time effaces, produce ambiguity in diction, and obſcurity in books. To this open diſplay of unadulterated nature it muſt be aſcribed, that Homer has fewer paſſages of doubtful meaning than any other poet either in the learned or in modern languages. I have read of a man, who being, by his ignorance of Greek, compelled to gratify his curioſity with the Latin printed on the oppoſite page, declared that from the rude ſimplicity of the lines literally rendered, he formed nobler ideas of the Homeric majeſty than from the laboured elegance of poliſhed verſions.

Thoſe literal tranſlations were always at hand, and from them he could eaſily obtain his author's ſenſe with ſufficient certainty; and among the readers of Homer the num-

ber is very ſmall of thoſe who find much in the Greek more than in the Latin except the muſic of the numbers.

If more help was wanting, he had the poetical tranſlation of *Eobanus Heſſus*, an unwearied writer of Latin verſes; he had the French Homers of *La Valterie* and *Dacier*, and the Engliſh of *Chapman*, *Hobbes*, and *Ogylby*. With Chapman, whoſe work, though now totally neglected, ſeems to have been popular almoſt to the end of the laſt century, he had very frequent conſultations, and perhaps never tranſlated any paſſage till he had read his verſion, which indeed he has been ſometimes ſuſpected of uſing inſtead of the original.

Notes were likewiſe to be provided; for the ſix volumes would have been very little more than ſix pamphlets without them. What the mere peruſal of the text could ſuggeſt Pope wanted no aſſiſtance to collect or methodize; but more was neceſſary; many pages were to be filled, and learning muſt ſupply materials to wit and judgment. Something might be gathered from Dacier; but no man loves to be indebted to his contemporaries, and Dacier was acceſſible to common readers. Euſtathius was therefore neceſſarily conſulted. To read Euſtathius, of whoſe work there was then no Latin verſion, I ſuſpect Pope, if he had been willing, not to have been able; ſome other was therefore to be found, who had leiſure as well as abilities, and he was doubtleſs moſt readily employed who would do much work for little money.

The hiſtory of the notes has never been traced. Broome, in his preface to his poems, declares himſelf the commentator *in part upon the Iliad;* and it appears from Fenton's Letter, preſerved in the Muſeum, that Broome was at firſt engaged in conſulting Euſtathius; but that after a time, whatever was the reaſon, he deſiſted: another man of Cambridge was then employed, who ſoon grew weary of the work; and a third, that was recommended by *Thirlby*, is now diſcovered to have been *Jortin*, a man ſince well known to the learned world, who complained that Pope, having accepted and approved his performance, never teſtified any curioſity to ſee him, and who profeſſed to have forgotten the terms on which he worked. The terms which Fenton uſes are very mercantile: "I think at firſt ſight that his performance is very commendable, and have ſent word for him to finiſh the ſeventeenth book, and to ſend it with his demands for his trouble; I have here encloſed the ſpe-

cimen ; if the reſt come before the return I will keep them till I receive your order."

Broome then offered his ſervice a ſecond time, which was probably accepted, as they had afterwards a cloſer correſpondence. Parnell contributed the Life of Homer, which Pope found ſo harſh, that he took great pains in correcting it ; and by his own diligence, with ſuch help as kindneſs or money could procure him, in ſomewhat more than five years he completed his verſion of the *Iliad*, with the notes. He began in 1712, his twenty-fifth year, and concluded it in 1718 his thirtieth year.

When we find him tranſlating fifty lines a day, it is natural to ſuppoſe that he would have brought his work to a more ſpeedy concluſion. The *Iliad*, containing leſs than ſixteen thouſand verſes, might have been diſpatched in leſs than three hundred twenty days by fifty verſes in a day. The notes, compiled with the aſſiſtance of his mercenaries, could not be ſuppoſed to require more time than the text. According to this calculation, the progreſs of Pope may ſeem to have been ſlow ; but the diſtance is commonly very great between actual performances and ſpeculative poſſibility. It is natural to ſuppoſe, that as much as has been done to day may be done to morrow ; but on the morrow ſome difficulty emerges, or ſome external impediment obſtructs. Indolence, interruption, buſineſs, and pleaſure, all take their turns of retardation ; and every long work is lengthened by a thouſand cauſes that can, and ten thouſand that cannot, be recounted. Perhaps no extenſive and multifarious performance was ever affected within the term originally fixed in the undertaker's mind. He that runs againſt Time, has an antagoniſt not ſubject to caſualties.

The encouragement given to this tranſlation, though report ſeems to have over-rated it, was ſuch as the world has not often ſeen. The ſubſcribers were five hundred and ſeventy-five. The copies for which ſubſcriptions were given were ſix hundred and fifty-four ; and only ſix hundred ſixty were printed. For thoſe copies Pope had nothing to pay ; he therefore received, including the two hundred pounds a volume, five thouſand three hundred and twenty pounds four ſhillings, without deduction, as the books were ſupplied by Lintot.

By the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription Pope was relieved from thoſe pecuniary diſtreſſes with which, notwithſtanding his popularity, he had hitherto ſtruggled. Lord Oxford had

often lamented his disqualification for public employment, but never proposed a pension. While the translation of *Homer* was in its progress, Mr. Craggs, then secretary of state, offered to procure him a pension, which, at least during his ministry, might be enjoyed with secrecy. This was not accepted by Pope, who told him, however, that, if he should be pressed with want of money, he would send to him for occasional supplies. Craggs was not long in power, and was never solicited for money by Pope, who disdained to beg what he did not want.

With the product of this subscription, which he had too much discretion to squander, he secured his future life from want, by considerable annuities. The estate of the Duke of Buckingham was found to have been charged with five hundred pounds a year, payable to Pope, which doubtless his translation enabled him to purchase.

It cannot be unwelcome to literary curiosity, that I deduce thus minutely the history of English *Iliad*. It is certainly the noblest version of poetry which the world has ever seen; and its publication must therefore be considered as one of the great events in the annals of Learning.

To those who have skill to estimate the excellence and difficulty of this great work, it must be very desirable to know how it was performed, and by what gradations it advanced to correctness. Of such an intellectual process the knowledge has very rarely been attainable; but happily there remains the original copy of the *Iliad*, which being obtained by Bolingbroke as a curiosity, descended from him to Mallet, and is now by the solicitation of the late Dr. Maty reposited in the Museum.

Between this manuscript, which is written upon accidental fragments of paper, and the printed edition, there must have been an intermediate copy, that was perhaps destroyed as it returned from the press.

From the first copy I have procured a few transcripts, and shall exhibit first the printed lines; then, I have indented those of the manuscripts, and have marked all their variations, in this manner: Those words in the indented lines, which are given in Italicks, are cancelled in the copy and the words placed under them adopted in their stead.

The beginning of the first book stands thus:

The wrath of Peleus' son, the direful spring
} fall the Grecian woes, O Goddess, sing;

That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The ſouls of mighty chiefs untimely ſlain.

The ſtern Pelides' *rage*, O Goddeſs, ſing,
wrath
Of all the woes *of Greece* the fatal ſpring,
Grecian
That ſtrew'd with *warriors* dead the Phrygian plain,
heroes
And *peopled the dark hell with heroes* ſlain;
fill'd the ſhady hell with chiefs untimely

Whoſe limbs, unburied on the naked ſhore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore,
Since great Achilles and Atrides ſtrove;
Such was the ſovereign doom, and ſuch the will of Jove.

Whoſe limbs, unburied on the hoſtile ſhore,
Devouring dogs and greedy vultures tore,
Since firſt *Atrides* and *Achilles* ſtrove;
Such was the ſovereign doom, and ſuch the will of Jove.

Declare, O Muſe, in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce ſtrife, from what offended Power!
Latona's ſon a dire contagion ſpread,
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead;
The King of Men his reverend prieſt defy'd,
And for the King's offence the people dy'd.

Declare, O Goddeſs, what offended Power
Enflam'd their *rage*, in that *ill omen'd* hour;
anger fatal, hapleſs
Phœbus himſelf the *dire* debate procur'd,
fierce
T' avenge the wrongs his injur'd prieſt endur'd;
For this the God a dire infection ſpread,
And heap'd the camp with millions of the dead:
The King of Men the ſacred Sire defy'd,
And for the King's offence the people dy'd.

For Chryſes ſought with coſtly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the Victor's chain;
Suppliant the venerable Father ſtands,
Apollo's awful enſigns grace his hands,
By theſe he begs, and, lowly bending down,
Extends the ſceptre and the laurel crown.

For Chryſes ſought by *presents to regain*
coſtly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the Victor's chain;

Suppliant the venerable Father ſtands,
Apollo's awful enſigns grac'd his hands,
By theſe he begs, and lowly bending down
The golden ſceptre and the laurel crown,
Preſents the ſceptre
For these as ensigns of his God he bare,
The God that sends his golden ſhafts afar;
The low on earth, the venerable man,
Suppliant before the brother kings began.

He ſued to all, but chief implor'd for grace
The brother kings of Atreus' royal race;
Ye kings and warriors, may your vows be crown'd,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground;
May Jove reſtore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleaſures of your native ſhore.

To all he ſued, but chief implor'd for grace
The brother kings of Atreus' royal race.
Ye *sons of Atreus*, may your vows be crown'd,
Kings and warriors.
Your labours, by the Gods be all your labours crown'd;
So may the Gods your arms with conquest bless,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground;
Till *laid*
And crown your labours with deserv'd success;
May Jove reſtore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleaſures of your native ſhore.

But oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,
And give Chryſeis to theſe arms again;
If mercy fail, yet let my preſent move,
And dread avenging Phœbus, ſon of Jove.

But, oh! relieve a hapleſs parent's pain,
And give my daughter to theſe arms again;
Receive my gifts; if mercy fails, yet let my preſent move,
And fear *the God that deals his darts around,*
avenging Phœbus, ſon of Jove.

The Greeks, in ſhouts, their joint aſſent declare
The prieſt to reverence, and releaſe the fair.
Not ſo Atrides; he, with kingly pride,
Repuls'd the ſacred Sire, and thus reply'd.

He ſaid, the Greeks their joint aſſent declare,
The father said, the gen'rous Greeks relent,
T' accept the ranſom, and releaſe the fair:
Revere the prieſt, and speak their joint assent:

Not ſo *the tyrant*, he, with kingly pride,
Atrides,
Repuls'd the ſacred Sire, and thus reply'd.
[Not ſo the tyrant. DRYDEN.]

Of theſe lines, and of the whole firſt book, I am told that there was yet a former copy, more varied, and more deformed with interlineations.

The beginning of the ſecond book varies very little from the printed pages, and is therefore ſet down without any parallel: the few ſlight differences do not require to be elaborately diſplayed.

Now pleaſing ſleep had ſeal'd each mortal eye;
Stretch'd in their tents the Grecian leaders lie;
Th' immortals ſlumber'd on their thrones above,
All but the ever-watchful eye of Jove.
To honour Thetis' ſon he bends his care,
And plunge the Greeks in all the woes of war.
Then bids an empty phantom riſe to fight,
And thus *commands* the viſion of the night:
directs
Fly hence, deluſive dream, and, light as air,
To Agamemnon's royal tent repair;
Bid him in arms draw forth th' embattled train,
March all his legions to the duſty plain.
Now tell the King 'tis given him to deſtroy
Declare ev'n now
The lofty *walls* of wide-extended Troy;
tow'rs
For now no more the Gods with Fate contend;
At Juno's ſuit the heavenly factions end.
Deſtruction *hovers* o'er yon devoted wall,
hangs
And nodding Ilium waits th' impending fall.

Invocation to the Catalogue of Ships.

Say, Virgins, ſeated round the throne divine,
All-knowing Goddeſſes! immortal Nine!
Since earth's wide regions, heaven's unmeaſur'd height,
And hell's abyſs, hide nothing from your ſight,
(We, wretched mortals! loſt in doubts below,
But gueſs by rumour, and but boaſt we know)
Oh, ſay what heroes, fir'd by thirſt of fame,
Or urg'd by wrongs, to Troy's deſtruction came!
To count them all, demands a thouſand tongues,
A throat of braſs and adamantine lungs.

Now, Virgin Goddeſſes, immortal Nine!
That round Olympus' heavenly ſummit ſhine,
Who ſee through heaven and earth, and hell profound,
And all things know, and all things can reſound!
Relate what armies fought the Trojan land,
What nations follow'd, and what chiefs command;
(For doubtful Fame diſtracts mankind below,
And nothing can we tell, and nothing know)
Without your aid, to count th' unnumber'd train,
A thouſand months, a thouſand tongues were vain.

Book V. v. 1.

But Pallas now Tydides' ſoul inſpires,
Fills with her force, and warms with all her fires:
Above the Greeks his deathleſs fame to raiſe,
And crown her hero with diſtinguiſh'd praiſe,
High on his helm celeſtial lightnings play,
His beamy ſhield emits a living ray;
Th' unwearied blaze inceſſant ſtreams ſupplies,
Like the red ſtar that fires th'autumnal ſkies.

But Pallas now Tydides' ſoul inſpires,
Fills with her *rage*, and warms with all her fires;
force,
O'er all the Greeks decrees his fame to raiſe,
Above the Greeks *her warrior's* fame to raiſe,
his deathleſs
And crown her hero with *immortal* praiſe:
diſtinguiſh'd
Bright from his beamy *creſt* the lightnings play,
High on helm
From his broad buckler flaſh'd the living ray,
High on his helm celeſtial lightnings play,
His beamy ſhield emits a living ray.
The Goddeſs with her breath the flame ſupplies,
Bright as the ſtar whoſe fires in Autumn riſe:
Her breath divine thick ſtreaming flames ſupplies,
Bright as the ſtar that fires the autumnal ſkies:
Th' unwearied blaze inceſſant ſtreams ſupplies,
Like the red ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies.

When firſt he rears his radiant orb to fight,
And bath'd in ocean ſhoots a keener light.
Such glories Pallas on the chief beſtow'd,
Such from his arms the fierce effulgence flow'd;
Onward ſhe drives him furious to engage,
Where the fight burns, and where the thickeſt rage.

When firſt he rears his radiant orb to fight,
And gilds old Ocean with a blaze of light.

Bright as the ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies,
Freſh from the deep, and gilds the ſeas and ſkies.
Such glories Pallas on her chief beſtow'd,
Such ſparkling rays from his bright armour flow'd,
Such from his arms the fierce effulgence flow'd.
Onward ſhe drives him *headlong* to engage,
furious
Where the *war bleeds*, and where the *fierceſt* rage.
fight burns, thickeſt

The ſons of Dares firſt the combat fought,
A wealthy prieſt, but rich without a fault;
In Vulcan's fane the father's days were led,
The ſons to toils of glorious battle bred;

There liv'd a Trojan—Dares was his name,
The prieſt of Vulcan, rich, yet void of blame;
The ſons of Dares firſt the combat fought,
A wealthy prieſt, but rich without a fault.

Conclusion of Book VIII. *v.* 687.

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er heaven's clear azure ſpreads her ſacred light;
When not a breath diſturbs the deep ſerene,
And not a cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn ſcene;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And ſtars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole:
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure ſhed,
And tip with ſilver every mountain's head;
Then ſhine the vales—the rocks in proſpect riſe,
A flood of glory burſts from all the ſkies;
The conſcious ſwains, rejoicing in the ſight,
Eye the blue vault, and bleſs the uſeful light.
So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays;
The long reflection of the diſtant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the ſpires.
A thouſand piles the duſky horrors gild,
And ſhoot a ſhady luſtre o'er the field;
Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
Whoſe umber'd arms by fits thick flaſhes ſend;
Loud neigh the courſers o'er their heaps of corn,
And ardent warriors wait the riſing morn.

As when in ſtillneſs of the ſilent night,
As when the moon in all her luſtre bright,
As when the moon refulgent lamp of night,
O'er heaven's *clear* azure *ſheds* her *ſilver* light;
pure ſpreads ſacred

As ſtill in air the trembling luſtre ſtood,
And o'er its golden border ſhoots a flood;
When *no loose gale* diſturbs the deep ſerene,
not a breath
And *no dim* cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn ſcene;
not a
Around her ſilver throne the planets glow,
And ſtars unnumber'd trembling beams beſtow;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And ſtars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole:
Clear gleams of light o'er the dark trees are ſeen,
o'er the dark trees a yellow ſheds,
O'er the dark trees a yellower *green* they ſhed,
gleam
verdure
And tip with ſilver all the *mountain* heads:
foreſt
And tip with ſilver every mountain's head.
The vallies open, and the foreſts riſe,
The vales appear, the rocks in proſpect riſe,
Then ſhine the vales, the rocks in proſpect riſe,
All Nature ſtands reveal'd before our eyes;
A flood of glory burſts from all the ſkies.
The conſcious ſhepherd, joyful at the ſight,
Eyes the blue vault, and numbers every light.
The conſcious *swains rejoicing at the* ſight
ſhepherds gazing with delight
Eye the blue vault, and bleſs the *vivid* light,
glorious
uſeful
So many flames before *the navy* blaze,
proud Ilion
And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays,
Wide o'er the fields to Troy extend the gleams,
And tip the diſtant ſpires with fainter beams;
The long reflexions of the diſtant fires
Gild the high walls, and tremble on the ſpires,
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the ſpires;
A thouſand fires at diſtant ſtations bright,
Gild the dark proſpect, and diſpel the night.

Of theſe ſpecimens every man who has cultivated poetry, or who delights to trace the mind from the rudeneſs of its firſt conceptions to the elegance of its laſt, will naturally deſire a greater number; but moſt other readers are already tired, and I am not writing only to poets and philoſophers.

The *Iliad* was publiſhed volume by volume, as the tranſlation proceeded; the four firſt books appeared in 1715.

The expectation of this work was undoubtedly high, and every man who had connected his name with criticism, or poetry, was desirous of such intelligence as might enable him to talk upon the popular topic. Halifax, who, by having been first a poet, and then a patron of poetry, had acquired the right of being a judge, was willing to hear some books while they were yet unpublished. Of this rehearsal Pope afterwards gave the following account*.

"The famous Lord Halifax was rather a pretender to taste than really possessed of it.——When I had finished the two or three first books of my translation of the *Iliad*, that Lord desired to have the pleasure of hearing them read at his house.—Addison, Congreve, and Garth, were there at the reading. In four or five places, Lord Halifax stopt me very civilly, and with a speech each time, much of the same kind, 'I beg your pardon, Mr. Pope; but there is something in that passage that does not quite please me.—Be so good as to mark the place, and consider it a little at your leisure.—I'm sure you can give it a little turn.' I returned from Lord Halifax's with Dr. Garth, in his chariot; and, as we were going along, was saying to the Doctor, that my Lord had laid me under a good deal of difficulty by such loose and general observations; that I had been thinking over the passages almost ever since, and could not guess at what it was that offended his Lordship in either of them. Garth laughed heartily at my embarrassment; said, I had not been long enough acquainted with Lord Halifax to know his way yet; that I need not puzzle myself about looking those places over and over, when I got home. 'All you need do (says he) is to leave them just as they are; call on Lord Halifax two or three months hence, thank him for his kind observations on those passages, and then read them to him as altered. I have known him much longer than you have, and will be answerable for the event.' I followed his advice; waited on Lord Halifax some time after; said, I hoped he would find his objections to those passages removed; read them to him exactly as they were at first: and his Lordship was extremely pleased with them, and cried out, *Ay, now they are perfectly right: nothing can be better.*

It is seldom that the great or the wise suspect that they are despised or cheated. Halifax, thinking this a lucky

* *Spence.*

opportunity of ſecuring immortality, made ſome advances of favour and ſome overtures of advantage to Pope, which he ſeems to have received with ſullen coldneſs. All our knowledge of this tranſaction is derived from a ſingle Letter (Dec. 1, 1714), in which Pope ſays, "I am obliged to you, both for the favours you have done me, and thoſe you intend me. I diſtruſt neither your will nor your memory, when it is to do good; and if I ever become troubleſome or ſolicitous, it muſt not be out of expectation, but out of gratitude. Your Lordſhip may cauſe me to live agreeably in the town, or contentedly in the country, which is really all the difference I ſet between an eaſy fortune and a ſmall one. It is indeed a high ſtrain of generoſity in you to think of making me eaſy all my life, only becauſe I have been ſo happy as to divert you ſome few hours; but, if I may have leave to add, it is becauſe you think me no enemy to my native country, there will appear a better reaſon; for I muſt of conſequence be very much (as I ſincerely am) yours &c."

Theſe voluntary offers, and this faint acceptance, ended without effect. The patron was not accuſtomed to ſuch frigid gratitude, and the poet fed his own pride with the dignity of independence. They probably were ſuſpicious of each other. Pope would not dedicate till he ſaw at what rate his praiſe was valued; he would be *troublesome out of gratitude, not expectation.* Halifax thought himſelf entitled to confidence; and would give nothing, unleſs he knew what he ſhould receive. Their commerce had its beginning in hope of praiſe on one ſide, and of money on the other, and ended becauſe Pope was leſs eager of money than Halifax of praiſe. It is not likely that Halifax had any perſonal benevolence to Pope; it is evident that Pope looked on Halifax with ſcorn and hatred.

The reputation of this great work failed of gaining him a patron; but it deprived him of a friend. Addiſon and he were now at the head of poetry and criticiſm; and both in ſuch a ſtate of elevation, that, like the two rivals in the Roman ſtate, one could no longer bear an equal, nor the other a ſuperior. Of the gradual abatement of kindneſs between friends, the beginning is often ſcarcely diſcernible by themſelves, and the proceſs is continued by petty provocations, and incivilities ſometimes peeviſhly returned, and ſometimes contemptuouſly neglected, which would eſcape all attention but that of pride, and drop from any

memory but that of resentment. That the quarrel of those two wits should be minutely deduced, is not to be expected from a writer to whom, as Homer says, *nothing but rumour has reached, and who has no personal knowledge.*

Pope doubtless approached Addison, when the reputation of their wit brought them together, with the respect due to a man whose abilities were acknowledged, and who having attained that eminence to which he was himself aspiring, had in his hands the distribution of literary fame. He paid court with sufficient diligence by his Prologue to *Cato*, by his abuse of Dennis, and, with praise yet more direct, by his poem on the *Dialogues on Medals*, of which the immediate publication was then intended. In all this there was no hypocrisy; for he confessed that he found in Addison something more pleasing than in any other man.

It may be supposed, that as Pope saw himself favoured by the world, and more frequently compared his own powers with those of others, his confidence increased, and his submission lessened; and that Addison felt no delight from the advances of a young wit, who might soon contend with him for the highest place. Every great man, of whatever kind be his greatness, has among his friends those who officiously, or insidiously, quicken his attention to offences, heighten his disgust, and stimulate his resentment. Of such adherents Addison doubtless had many, and Pope was now too high to be without them.

From the emission and reception of the Proposals for the *Iliad*, the kindness of Addison seems to have abated. Jervas the painter once pleased himself (Aug. 20, 1714) with imagining that he had re-established their friendship; and wrote to Pope that Addison once suspected him of too close a confederacy with Swift, but was now satisfied with his conduct. To this Pope answered, a week after, that his engagements to Swift were such as his services in regard to the subscription demanded, and that the Tories never put him under the necessity of asking leave to be grateful. "But," says he, "as Mr. Addison must be *the judge* in what regards himself, and seems to have no very just one in regard to me, so I must own to you I expect nothing but civility from him." In the same letter he mentions Philips as having been busy to kindle animosity between them; but, in a letter to Addison, he expresses some consciousness of behaviour, inattentively deficient in respect.

Of Swift's induſtry in promoting the ſubſcription there remains the teſtimony of Kennet, no friend to either him or Pope.

"Nov. 2, 1713, Dr. Swift came into the coffee-houſe, and had a bow from every body but me, who, I confeſs, could not but deſpiſe him. When I came to the anti-chamber to wait, before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and buſineſs, and acted as maſter of bequeſts.—— Then he inſtructed a young nobleman that the *best Poet in England* was *Mr. Pope* (a papiſt) who had begun a tranſlation of *Homer* into Engliſh verſe, for which *he must have them all subscribe*; for, ſays he, the author *shall not* begin to print till *I have* a thouſand guineas for him."

About this time it is likely that Steele, who was, with all his political fury, good-natured and officious, procured an interview between theſe angry rivals, which ended in aggravated malevolence. On this occaſion, if the reports be true, Pope made his complaint with frankneſs and ſpirit, as a man undeſervedly neglected or oppoſed; and Addiſon affected a contemptuous unconcern, and, in a calm even voice, reproached Pope with his vanity, and telling him of the improvements which his early works had received from his own remarks and thoſe of Steele, ſaid, that he, being now engaged in public buſineſs, had no longer any care for his poetical reputation; nor had any other deſire, with regard to Pope, than that his ſhould not, by too much arrogance, alienate the public.

To this Pope is ſaid to have replied with great keenneſs and ſeverity, upbraiding Addiſon with perpetual dependance and with the abuſe of thoſe qualifications which he had obtained at the public coſt, and charging him with mean endeavours to obſtruct the progreſs of riſing merit. The conteſt roſe ſo high, that they parted at laſt without any interchange of civility.

The firſt volume of *Homer* was (1715) in time publiſhed; and a rival verſion of the firſt *Iliad*, for rivals the time of their appearance inevitably made them, was immediately printed, with the name of Tickell. It was ſoon perceived that, among the followers of Addiſon, Tickell had the preference, and the critics and poets divided into factions. "I," ſays Pope, "have the town, that is, the mob, on my ſide; but it is not uncommon for the ſmaller party to ſupply by induſtry what it wants in numbers.—I appeal to the people as my rightful judges, and while they are not in-

clined to condemn me, ſhall not fear the high-flyers at Button's." This oppoſition he immediately imputed to Addiſon, and complained of it in terms ſufficiently reſentful to Craggs, their common friend.

When Addiſon's opinion was aſked, he declared the verſions to be both good, but Tickell's the beſt that had ever been written; and ſometimes ſaid that they were both good, but that Tickell had more of *Homer*.

Pope was now ſufficiently irritated; his reputation and his intereſt were at hazard. He once intended to print together the four verſions of Dryden, Maynwaring, Pope, and Tickell, that they might be readily compared and fairely eſtimated. This deſign ſeems to have been defeated by the refuſal of Tonſon, who was the proprietor of the other three verſions.

Pope intended at another time a rigorous criticiſm of Tickell's tranſlation, and had marked a copy, which I have ſeen, in all places that appeared defective. But while he was thus meditating defence or revenge, his adverſary ſunk before him without a blow; the voice of the public were not long divided, and the preference was univerſally given to Pope's performance.

He was convinced, by adding one circumſtance to another, that the other tranſlation was the work of Addiſon himſelf; but if he knew it in Addiſon's life-time, it does not appear that he told it. He left his illuſtrious antagoniſt to be puniſhed by what has been conſidered the moſt painful of all reflections, the remembrance of a crime perpetrated in vain.

The other circumſtances of their quarrel were thus related by Pope *.

"Philips ſeemed to have been encouraged to abuſe me in coffee-houſes, and converſations: and Gildon wrote a thing about Wycherley, in which he had abuſed both me and my relations very groſsly. Lord Warwick himſelf told me one day, that it was in vain for me to endeavour to be well with Mr. Addiſon; that his jealous temper would never admit of a ſettled friendſhip between us: and to convince me of what he had ſaid, aſſured me, that Addiſon had encouraged Gildon to publiſh thoſe ſcandals, and had given him ten guineas after they were publiſhed. The next day, while I was heated with what I had heard, I wrote a

* *Spence.*

letter to Mr. Addiſon, to let him know that I was not unacquainted with this behaviour of his: that if I was to ſpeak ſeverely of him, in return for it, it ſhould be in ſuch a dirty way, that I ſhould rather tell him, himſelf, fairly of his faults, and allow his good qualities; and that it ſhould be ſomething in the following manner: I then adjoined the firſt ſketch of what has ſince been called my ſatire on Addiſon. Mr. Addiſon uſed me very civilly ever after."

The verſes on Addiſon, when they were ſent to Atterbury, were conſidered by him as the moſt excellent of Pope's performances; and the writer was adviſed, ſince he knew where his ſtrength lay, not to ſuffer it to remain unemployed.

This year (1715) being, by the ſubſcription, enabled to live more by choice, having perſuaded his father to ſell their eſtate at Binfield, he purchaſed, I think only for his life, that houſe at Twickenham to which his reſidence afterwards procured ſo much celebration, and removed thither with his father and mother.

Here he planted the vines and the quincunx which his verſes mention; and being under the neceſſity of making a ſubterraneous paſſage to a garden on the other ſide of the road, he adorned it with foſſile bodies, and dignified it with the title of a grotto; a place of ſilence and retreat, from which he endeavoured to perſuade his friends and himſelf, that cares and paſſions could be excluded.

A grotto is not often the wiſh or pleaſure of an Engliſhman, who has more frequent need to ſolicit than exclude the ſun; but Pope's excavation was requiſite as an entrance to his garden, and, as ſome men try to be proud of their defects, he extracted an ornament from an inconvenience, and vanity produced a grotto where neceſſity enforced a paſſage. It may be frequently remarked of the ſtudious and ſpeculative, that they are proud of trifles, and that their amuſements ſeem frivolous and childiſh; whether it be that men conſcious of great reputation think themſelves above the reach of cenſure, and ſafe in the admiſſion of negligent indulgences, or that mankind expect from elevated genius an uniformity of greatneſs, and watch its degradation with malicious wonder; like him who having followed with his eye an eagle into the clouds, ſhould lament that ſhe ever deſcended to a perch.

While the volumes of his *Homer* were annually publiſhed he collected his former works (1717) into one quarter vo-

lume, to which he prefixed a Preface, written with great ſpritelineſs and elegance, which was afterwards reprinted, with ſome paſſages ſubjoined that he at firſt omitted; other marginal additions of the ſame kind he made in the later editions of his poems. Waller remarks, that poets loſe half their praiſe, becauſe the reader knows not what they have blotted. Pope's voracity of fame taught him the art of obtaining the accumulated honour both of what he had publiſhed, and of what he had ſuppreſſed.

In this year his father died ſuddenly, in his ſeventy-fifth year, having paſſed twenty-nine years in privacy. He is not known but by the character which his ſon has given him. If the money with which he retired was all gotten by himſelf, he had traded very ſucceſsfully in times when ſudden riches were rarely attainable.

The publication of the *Iliad* was at laſt completed in 1720. The ſplendour and ſucceſs of this work raiſed Pope many enemies, that endeavoured to depreciate his abilities; Burnet, who was afterwards a Judge of no mean reputation, cenſured him in a piece called *Homerides* before it was publiſhed; Ducket likewiſe endeavoured to make him ridiculous. Dennis was the perpetual perſecutor of all his ſtudies. But, whoever his critics were, their writings are loſt, and the names which are preſerved, are preſerved in the *Dunciad*.

In this diſaſtrous year (1720) of national infatuation, when more riches than Peru can boaſt were expected from the South Sea, when the contagion of avarice tainted every mind, and even poets panted after wealth, Pope was ſeized with the univerſal paſſion, and ventured ſome of his money. The ſtock roſe in its price; and he for a while thought himſelf *the Lord of thousands*. But this dream of happineſs did not laſt long, and he ſeems to have waked ſoon enough to get clear with the loſs only of what he once thought himſelf to have won, and perhaps not wholly of that.

Next year he publiſhed ſome ſelect poems of his friend Dr. Parnell, with a very elegant Dedication to the Earl of Oxford; who, after all his ſtruggles and dangers, then lived in retirement, ſtill under the frown of a victorious faction, who could take no pleaſure in hearing his praiſe.

He gave the ſame year (1721) an edition of *Shakſpeare*. His name was now of ſo much authority, that Tonſon thought himſelf entitled, by annexing it, to demand a ſub-

ſcription of ſix guineas for Shakſpeare's plays in ſix quarto volumes; nor did his expectation much deceive him; for of ſeven hundred and fifty which he printed, he diſperſed a great number at the price propoſed. The reputation of that edition indeed ſunk afterwards ſo low, that one hundred and forty copies were ſold at ſixteen ſhillings each.

On this undertaking, to which Pope was induced by a reward of two hundred and ſeventeen pounds twelve ſhillings, he ſeems never to have reflected afterwards without vexation; for Theobald, a man of heavy diligence, with very ſlender powers, firſt, in a book called *Shakſpeare Reſtored*, and then in a formal edition, detected his deficiencies with all the inſolence of victory; and, as he was now high enough to be feared and hated, Theobald had from others all the help that could be ſupplied, by the deſire of humbling a haughty character.

From this time Pope became an enemy to editors, collaters, commentators, and verbal critics; and hoped to perſuade the world, that he miſcarried in this undertaking only by having a mind too great for ſuch minute employment.

Pope in his edition undoubtedly did many things wrong, and left many things undone; but let him not be defrauded of his due praiſe. He was the firſt that knew, at leaſt the firſt that told, by what helps the text might be improved. If he inſpected the early editions negligently, he taught others to be more accurate. In his Preface he expanded with great ſkill and elegance the character which had been given of Shakſpeare by Dryden; and he drew the public attention upon his works, which, though often mentioned, had been little read.

Soon after the appearance of the *Iliad*, reſolving not to let the general kindneſs cool, he publiſhed propoſals for a tranſlation of the *Odyſſey*, in five volumes, for five guineas. He was willing, however, now to have aſſociates in his labour, being either weary with toiling upon another's thoughts, or having heard, as Ruffhead relates, that Fenton and Broome had already begun the work, and liking better to have them confederates than rivals.

In the patent, inſtead of ſaying that he had *tranſlated* the *Odyſſey*, as he had ſaid of the *Iliad*, he ſays that he had *undertaken* a tranſlation; and in the propoſals the ſubſcrip-

tion is ſaid to be not ſolely for his own uſe, but for that of *two of his friends who have assisted him in this work.*

In 1723, while he was engaged in this new verſion, he appeared before the Lords at the memorable trial of Biſhop Atterbury, with whom he had lived in great familiarity, and frequent correſpondence. Atterbury had honeſtly recommended to him the ſtudy of the popiſh controverſy, in hope of his converſion; to which Pope anſwered in a manner that cannot much recommend his principles, or his judgment. In queſtions and projects of learning, they agreed better. He was called at the trial to give an account of Atterbury's domeſtic life, and private employment, that it might appear how little time he had left for plots. Pope had but few words to utter, and in thoſe few he made ſeveral blunders.

His Letters to Atterbury expreſs the utmoſt eſteem, tenderneſs, and gratitude: *perhaps*, ſays he, *it is not only in this world that I may have cause to remember the Bishop of Rochester.* At their laſt interview in the Tower, Atterbury preſented him with a Bible.

Of the *Odyssey* Pope tranſlated only twelve books; the reſt were the work of Broome and Fenton: the notes were written wholly by Broome, who was not over-liberally rewarded. The public was carefully kept ignorant of the ſeveral ſhares; and an account was ſubjoined at the concluſion, which is now known not to be true.

The firſt copy of Pope's books, with thoſe of Fenton, are to be ſeen in the Muſeum. The parts of Pope are leſs internal than the *Iliad*, and the latter books of the *Iliad* leſs than the former. He grew dexterous by practice, and every ſheet enabled him to write the next with more facility. The books of Fenton have very few alterations by the hand of Pope. Thoſe of Broome have not been found; but Pope complained, as it is reported, that he had much trouble in correcting them.

His contract with Lintot was the ſame as for the *Iliad*, except that only one hundred pounds were to be paid him for each volume. The number of ſubſcribers was five hundred and ſeventy-four, and of copies eight hundred and nineteen; ſo that his profit, when he had paid his aſſiſtants, was ſtill very conſiderable. The work was finiſhed in 1725, and from that time he reſolved to make no more tranſlations.

The ſale did not anſwer Lintot's expectations, and he then pretended to diſcover ſomething of fraud in Pope, and commenced, or threatened, a ſuit in Chancery.

On the Engliſh *Odyssey* a criticiſm was publiſhed by Spence, at that time Prelector of Poetry at Oxford; a man whoſe learning was not very great, and whoſe mind was not very powerful. His criticiſm, however, was commonly juſt; what he thought, he thought rightly; and his remarks were recommended by his coolneſs and candour. In him Pope had the firſt experience of a critic without malevolence, who thought it as much his duty to diſplay beauties as expoſe faults; who cenſured with reſpect, and praiſed with alacrity.

With this criticiſm Pope was ſo little offended, that he ſought the acquaintance of the writer, who lived with him from that time in great familiarity, attended him in his laſt hours, and compiled memorials of his converſation. The regard of Pope recommended him to the great and powerful, and he obtained very valuable preferments in the Church.

Not long after Pope was returning home from a viſit in a friend's coach, which, in paſſing a bridge, was overturned into the water; the windows were cloſed, and being unable to force them open, he was in danger of immediate death, when the poſtilion ſnatched him out by breaking the glaſs, of which the fragments cut two of his fingers in ſuch a manner, that he loſt their uſe.

Voltaire, who was then in England, ſent him a Letter of Conſolation. He had been entertained by Pope at his table, where he talked with ſo much groſſneſs that Mrs. Pope was driven from the room. Pope diſcovered, by a trick, that he was a ſpy for the Court, and never conſidered him as a man worthy of confidence.

He ſoon afterwards (1727) joined with Swift, who was then in England, to publiſh three volumes of Miſcellanies, in which amongſt other things he inſerted the *Memoirs of a Parish Clerk*, in ridicule of Burnet's importance in his own Hiſtory, and a *Debate upon White and Black Horses*, written in all the formalities of a legal proceſs, by the aſſiſtance, as is ſaid, of Mr. Forteſcue, afterwards Maſter of the Rolls. Before theſe Miſcellanies is a preface ſigned by Swift and Pope but apparently written by Pope; in which he makes a ridiculous and romantic complaint of the robberies committed upon authors by the clandeſtine ſei-

ſure and ſale of their papers. He tells, in tragic ſtrains, how *the cabinets of the Sick and the cloſets of the Dead have been broke open and ranſacked;* as if thoſe violences were often committed for papers of uncertain and accidental value, which are rarely provoked by real treaſures; as if epigrams and eſſays were in danger where gold and diamonds are ſafe. A cat, hunted for his muſk, is, according to Pope's account, but the emblem of a wit winded by bookſellers.

His complaint, however, received ſome atteſtation; for the ſame year the Letters written by him to Mr. Cromwell, in his youth, were ſold by Mrs. Thomas to Curll, who printed them.

In theſe Miſcellanies was firſt publiſhed *the Art of Sinking in Poetry*, which, by ſuch a train of conſequences as uſually paſſes in literary quarrels, gave in a ſhort time, according to Pope's account, occaſion to the *Dunciad*.

In the following year (1728) he began to put Atterbury's advice in practice; and ſhewed his ſatirical powers by publiſhing the *Dunciad*, one of his greateſt and moſt elaborate performances, in which he endeavoured to ſink into contempt all the writers by whom he had been attacked, and ſome others whom he thought unable to defend themſelves.

At the head of the Dunces he placed poor Theobald, whom he accuſed of ingratitude; but whoſe real crime was ſuppoſed to be that of having reviſed *Shakſpeare* more happily than himſelf. This ſatire had the effect which he intended, by blaſting the characters which it touched. Ralph, who, unneceſſarily interpoſing in the quarrel, got a place in a ſubſequent edition, complained that for a time he was in danger of ſtarving, as the bookſellers had no longer any confidence in his capacity.

The prevalence of this poem was gradual and ſlow: the plan, if not wholly new, was little underſtood by common readers. Many of the alluſions required illuſtration; the names were often expreſſed only by the initial and final letters, and, if they had been printed at length, were ſuch as few had known or recollected. The ſubject itſelf had nothing generally intereſting, for whom did it concern to know that one or another ſcribbler was a dunce? If therefore it had been poſſible for thoſe who were attacked to conceal their pain and their reſentment, the *Dunciad* might have made its way very ſlowly in the world.

This, however, was not to be expected: every man is of importance to himself, and therefore, in his own opinion, to others; and, supposing the world already acquainted with all his pleasures and his pains, is perhaps the first to publish injuries or misfortunes, which had never been known unless related by himself, and at which those that hear them will only laugh; for no man sympathises with the sorrows of vanity.

The history of the *Dunciad* is very minutely related by Pope himself, in a Dedication which he wrote to Lord Middlesex in the name of Savage.

"I will relate the war of the *Dunces* (for so it has been commonly called), which began in the year 1727, and ended in 1730.

"When Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope thought it proper, for reasons specified in the Preface to their Miscellanies, to publish such little pieces of theirs as had casually got abroad, there was added to them the *Treatise of the Bathos*, or the *Art of Sinking in Poetry*. It happened that in one chapter of this piece the several species of bad poets were ranged in classes, to which were prefixed almost all the letters of the alphabet (the greatest part of them at random); but such was the number of poets eminent in that art, that some one or other took every letter to himself; all fell into so violent a fury, that, for half a year or more, the common newspapers (in most of which they had some property, as being hired writers) were filled with the most abusive falsehoods and scurrilities they could possibly devise. A liberty no way to be wondered at in those people, and in those papers, that for many years, during the uncontrouled license of the press, had aspersed almost all the great characters of the age; and this with impunity, their own persons and names being utterly secret and obscure.

"This gave Mr. Pope the thought, that he had now some opportunity of doing good, by detecting and dragging into light these common enemies of mankind; since to invalidate this universal slander, it sufficed to shew what contemptible men were the authors of it. He was not without hopes, that, by manifesting the dulness of those who had only malice to recommend them, either the booksellers would not find their account in employing them, or the men themselves, when discovered, want courage to proceed in so unlawful an occupation. This it was that gave birth to the *Dunciad*; and he thought it an happiness, that,

by the late flood of ſlander on himſelf, he had acquired ſuch a peculiar right over their names as was neceſſary to this deſign."

"On the 12th of March, 1729, at St. James's, that poem was preſented to the King and Queen (who had before been pleaſed to read it) by the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole; and ſome days after the whole impreſſion was taken and diſperſed by ſeveral noblemen and perſons of the firſt diſtinction.

"It is certainly a true obſervation, that no people are ſo impatient of cenſure as thoſe who are the greateſt ſlanderers, which was wonderfully exemplified on this occaſion. On the day the book was firſt vended, a crowd of authors beſieged the ſhop; intreaties, advices, threats of law and battery, nay cries of treaſon, were all employed to hinder the coming out of the *Danciad;* on the other ſide, the bookſellers and hawkers made as great efforts to procure it. What could a few poor authors do againſt ſo great a majority as the public? There was no ſtopping a torrent with a finger, ſo out it came."

"Many ludicrous circumſtances attended it. The *Dunces* (for by this name they were called) held weekly clubs, to conſult of hoſtilities againſt the author: one wrote a letter to a great miniſter, aſſuring him Mr. Pope was the greateſt enemy the government had; and another bought his image in clay, to execute him in effigy, with which ſad ſort of ſatisfaction the gentlemen were a little comforted."

"Some falſe editions of the book having an owl in their frontiſpiece, the true one, to diſtinguiſh it, fixed in its ſtead an aſs laden with authors. Then another ſurreptitious one being printed with the ſame aſs, the new edition in octavo returned for diſtinction to the owl again. Hence aroſe a great conteſt of bookſellers againſt bookſellers, and advertiſements againſt advertiſements; ſome recommending the edition of the owl, and others the edition of the aſs; by which means they came to be diſtinguiſhed, to the great honour alſo of the gentlemen of the *Dunciad.*"

Pope appears by this narrative to have contemplated his victory over the *Dunces* with great exultation; and ſuch was his delight in the tumult which he had raiſed, that for a while his natural ſenſibility was ſuſpended, and he read reproaches and invectives without emotion, conſidering

them only as the neceſſary effects of that pain which he rejoiced in having given.

It cannot however be concealed that, by his own confeſſion, he was the aggreſſor; for nobody believes that the letters in the *Bathos* were placed at random; and it may be diſcovered that, when he thinks himſelf concealed, he indulges the common vanity of common men, and triumphs in thoſe diſtinctions which he had affected to deſpiſe. He is proud that his book was preſented to the King and Queen by the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole; he is proud that they had read it before; he is proud that the edition was taken off by the nobility and perſons of the firſt diſtinction.

The edition of which he ſpeaks was, I believe, that which by telling in the text the names and in the notes the characters of thoſe whom he had ſatiriſed, was made intelligible and diverting. The critics had now declared their approbation of the plan, and the common reader began to like it without fear; thoſe who were ſtrangers to petty literature, and therefore unable to decypher initials and blanks, had now names and perſons brought within their view; and delighted in the viſible effect of thoſe ſhafts of malice, which they had hitherto contemplated, as ſhot into the air.

Dennis, upon the freſh provocation now given him, renewed the enmity which had for a time been appeaſed by mutual civilities; and publiſhed remarks, which he had till then ſuppreſſed, upon the *Rape of the Lock*. Many more grumbled in ſecret, or vented their reſentment in the newſpapers by epigrams or invectives.

Ducket, indeed, being mentioned as loving Burnet with *pious paſſion*, pretended that his moral character was injured, and for ſome time declared his reſolution to take vengeance with a cudgel. But Pope appeaſed him, by changing *pious paſſion* to *cordial friendſhip*, and by a note, in which he vehemently diſclaims the malignity of meaning imputed to the firſt expreſſion.

Aaron Hill, who was repreſented as dividing for the prize, expoſtulated with Pope in a manner ſo much ſuperior to all mean ſolicitation, that Pope was reduced to ſneak and ſhuffle, ſometimes to deny, and ſometimes to apologize; he firſt endeavours to wound, and is then afraid to own that he meant a blow.

The *Dunciad*, in the complete edition, is addreſſed to Dr. Swift: of the notes, part was written by Dr. Arbuthnot and an apologetical Letter was prefixed, ſigned by Cleland, but ſuppoſed to have been written by Pope.

After this general war upon dulneſs, he ſeems to have indulged himſelf awhile in tranquillity; but his ſubſequent productions prove that he was not idle. He publiſhed (1731) a poem on *Taſte*, in which he very particularly and ſeverely criticiſes the houſe, the furniture, the gardens, and the entertainments of *Timon*, a man of great wealth and little taſte. By *Timon* he was univerſally ſuppoſed, and by the Earl of Burlington, to whom the poem is addreſſed, was privately ſaid, to mean the Duke of Chandos; a man perhaps too much delighted with pomp and ſhow, but of a temper kind and beneficent, and who had conſequently the voice of the public in his favour.

A violent outcry was therefore raiſed againſt the ingratitude and treachery of Pope, who was ſaid to have been indebted to the patronage of Chandos for a preſent of a thouſand pounds, and who gained the opportunity of inſulting him by the kindneſs of his invitation.

The receipt of the thouſand pounds Pope publicly denied; but from the reproach which the attack on a character ſo amiable brought upon him, he tried all means of eſcaping.

The name of Cleland was again employed in an apology by which no man was ſatisfied; and he was at laſt reduced to ſhelter his temerity behind diſſimulation, and endeavour to make that diſbelieved which he never had confidence openly to deny. He wrote an exculpatory letter to the Duke, which was anſwered with great magnanimity, as by a man who accepted his excuſe without believing his profeſſions. He ſaid, that to have ridiculed his taſte, or his buildings, had been an indifferent action in another man; but that in Pope, after the reciprocal kindneſs that had been exchanged between them, it has been leſs eaſily excuſed.

Pope, in one of his Letters, complaining of the treatment which his poem had found, *owns that ſuch critics can intimidate him, nay almoſt perſuade him to write no more, which is a compliment this age deſerves.* The man who threatens the world is always ridiculous; for the world can eaſily go on without him, and in a ſhort time will ceaſe to miſs him. I have heard of an idiot, who uſed to revenge his vexations by lying all night upon the bridge. *There is*

nothing, says Juvenal, *that a man will not believe in his own favour.* Pope had been flattered till he thought himself one of the moving powers in the system of life. When he talked of laying down his pen, those who sat round him intreated and implored, and self-love did not suffer him to suspect that they went away and laughed.

The following year deprived him of Gay, a man whom he had known early, and whom he seemed to love with more tenderness than any other of his literary friend. Pope was now forty-four years old; an age at which the mind begins less easily to admit new confidence, and the will to grow less flexible, and when therefore the departure of an old friend is very acutely felt.

In the next year he lost his mother, not by an unexpected death, for she had lasted to the age of ninety-three; but she did not die unlamented. The filial piety of Pope was in the highest degree amiable and exemplary; his parents had the happiness of living till he was at the summit of poetical reputation, till he was at ease in his fortune, and without a rival in his fame, and found no diminution of his respect or tenderness. Whatever was his pride, to them he was obedient; and whatever was his irritability, to them he was gentle. Life has, among its soothing and quiet comforts, few things better to give than such a son.

One of the passages of Pope's life, which seems to deserve some enquiry, was a publication of Letters between him and many of his friends, which falling into the hands of Curll, a rapacious bookseller of no good fame, were by him printed and sold. This volume containing some Letters from noblemen, Pope incited a prosecution against him in the House of Lords for breach of privilege, and attended himself to stimulate the resentment of his friends. *Curll* appeared at the bar, and knowing himself in no great danger, spoke of Pope with very little reverence. *He has*, said Curll, *a knack at versifying, but in prose I think myself a match for him.* When the orders of the House were examined, none of them appeared to have been infringed; Curll went away triumphant, and Pope was left to seek some other remedy.

Curll's account was, that one evening a man in a clergyman's gown, but with a lawyer's band, brought and offered to sale a number of printed volumes, which he found to be Pope's epistolary correspondence; that he asked no name and was told none, but gave the price demanded, and

thought himſelf authoriſed to uſe his purchaſe to his own advantage.

That Curll gave a true account of the tranſaction, it is reaſonable to believe, becauſe no falſehood was ever detected; and when ſome years afterwards I mentioned it to Lintot, the ſon of Bernard, he declared his opinion to be that Pope knew better than any body elſe how Curll obtained the copies, becauſe another parcel was at the ſame time ſent to himſelf, for which no price had ever been demanded, as he made known his reſolution not to pay a porter, and conſequently not to deal with a nameleſs agent.

Such care had been taken to make them public, that they were ſent at once to two bookſellers; to Curll, who was likely to ſeize them as a prey, and to Lintot who might be expected to give Pope information of the ſeeming injury. Lintot, I believe, did nothing; and Curll did what was expected. That to make them public was the only purpoſe may be reaſonably ſuppoſed, becauſe the numbers offered to ſale by the private meſſengers ſhewed that hope of gain could not have been the motive of the impreſſion.

It ſeems that Pope, being deſirous of printing his Letters, and not knowing how to do, without imputation of vanity, what has in this country been done very rarely, contrived an appearance of compulſion; that when he could complain that his Letters were ſurreptitiouſly publiſhed he might decently and defenſively publiſh them himſelf.

Pope's private correſpondence, thus promulgated, filled the nation with praiſes of his candour, tenderneſs, and benevolence, the purity of his purpoſes, and the fidelity of his friendſhip. There were ſome Letters which a very good or a very wiſe man would wiſh ſuppreſſed; but, as they had been already expoſed, it was impracticable now to retract them.

From the peruſal of thoſe Letters, Mr. Allen firſt conceived the deſire of knowing him; and with ſo much zeal did he cultivate the friendſhip which he had newly formed that when Pope told his purpoſe of vindicating his own property by a genuine edition, he offered to pay the coſt.

This however Pope did not accept; but in time ſolicited a ſubſcription for a Quarto volume, which appeared (1737) I believe, with ſufficient profit. In the Preface he tells that his Letters were repoſited in a friend's library, ſaid to be the Earl of Oxford's, and that the copy thence ſtolen was

ſent to the preſs. The ſtory was doubtleſs received with different degrees of credit. It may be ſuſpected that the Preface to the Miſcellanies was written to prepare the public for ſuch an incident; and to ſtrengthen this opinion, James Worſdale, a painter, who was employed in clandeſtine negotiations, but whoſe veracity was very doubtful, declared that he was the meſſenger who carried, by Pope's direction, the books to Curll.

When they were thus publiſhed and avowed, as they had relation to recent facts, and perſons either then living or not yet forgotten, they may be ſuppoſed to have found readers; but as the facts were minute, and the characters being either private or literary, were little known, or little regarded, they awakened no popular kindneſs or reſentment: the book never became much the ſubject of converſation; ſome read it as contemporary hiſtory, and ſome perhaps as a model of epiſtolary language; but thoſe who read it did not talk of it. Not much therefore was added by it to fame or envy; nor do I remember that it produced either public praiſe, or public cenſure.

It had however, in ſome degree, the recommendation of novelty. Our language has few Letters, except thoſe of ſtateſmen. Howel indeed, about a century ago, publiſhed his Letters, which are commended by *Morhoff*, and which alone of his hundred volumes continue his memory. Loveday's Letters were printed only once; thoſe of Herbert and Suckling are hardly known. Mrs. Philips [*Orinda's*] are equally neglected; and thoſe of Walſh ſeem written as exerciſes, and were never ſent to any living miſtreſs or friend. Pope's epiſtolary excellence had an open field; he had no Engliſh rival, living or dead.

Pope is ſeen in this collection as connected with the other contemporary wits, and certainly ſuffers no diſgrace in the compariſon; but it muſt be remembered, that he had the power of favouring himſelf: he might have originally had publication in his mind, and have written with care, or have afterwards ſelected thoſe which he had moſt happily conceived, or moſt diligently laboured; and I know not whether there does not appear ſomething more ſtudied and artificial in his productions than the reſt, except one long Letter by Bolingbroke, compoſed with all the ſkill and induſtry of a profeſſed author. It is indeed not eaſy to diſtinguiſh affectation from habit; he that has once ſtudiouſly formed a ſtyle, rarely writes afterwards with complete

eaſe. Pope may be ſaid to write always with his reputation in his head; Swift perhaps like a man who remembered that he was writing to Pope; but Arbuthnot like one who lets thoughts drop from his pen as they riſe into his mind.

Before theſe Letters appeared, he publiſhed the firſt part of what he perſuaded himſelf to think a ſyſtem of Ethics, under the title of an *Essay on Man;* which, if his Letter to Swift (of Sept. 14, 1725) be rightly explained by the commentator, had been eight years under his conſideration, and of which he ſeems to have deſired the ſucceſs with great ſolicitude. He had now many open and doubtleſs many ſecret enemies. The *Dunces* were yet ſmarting with the war; and the ſuperiority which he publicly arrogated, diſpoſed the world to wiſh his humiliation.

All this he knew, and againſt all this he provided. His own name, and that of his friend to whom the work is inſcribed, were in the firſt editions carefully ſuppreſſed; and the poem, being of a new kind, was aſcribed to one or another, as favour determined, or conjecture wandered; it was given, ſays Warburton, to every man, except him only who could write it. Thoſe who like only when they like the author, and who are under the dominion of a name, condemned it; and thoſe admired it who are willing to ſcatter praiſe at random, which while it is unappropriated excites no envy. Thoſe friends of Pope, that were truſted with the ſecret, went about laviſhing honours on the new-born poet, and hinting that Pope was never ſo much in danger from any former rival.

To thoſe authors whom he had perſonally offended, and to thoſe whoſe opinion the world conſidered as deciſive, and whom he ſuſpected of envy or malevolence, he ſent his eſſay as a preſent before publication, that they might defeat their own enmity by praiſes, which they could not afterwards decently retract.

With theſe precautions, in 1733 was publiſhed the firſt part of the *Essay on Man.* There had been for ſome time a report that Pope was buſy upon a Syſtem of Morality; but this deſign was not diſcovered in the new poem, which had a form and a title with which its readers were unacquainted. Its reception was not uniform; ſome thought it a very imperfect piece, though not without good lines. While the author was unknown, ſome, as will always happen, favoured him as an adventurer, and ſome cenſured

him as an intruder; but all thought him above neglect; the ſale increaſed, and editions were multiplied.

The ſubſequent editions of the firſt Epiſtle exhibited two memorable corrections. At firſt, the poet and his friend

> Expatiate freely o'er this ſcene of man,
> A mighty maze *of walks without a plan.*

For which he wrote afterwards,

> A mighty maze, *but not without a plan:*

for, if there were no plan, it was in vain to deſcribe or to trace the maze.

The other alteration was of theſe lines;

> And ſpite of pride, *and in thy reaſon's ſpite,*
> One truth is clear, whatever is, is right:

but having afterwards diſcovered, or been ſhewn, that the *truth* which ſubſiſted *in ſpite of reaſon* could not be very *clear*, he ſubſtituted

> And ſpite of pride, *in erring reaſon's ſpite.*

To ſuch overſights will the moſt vigorous mind be liable, when it is employed at once upon argument and poetry.

The ſecond and third Epiſtles were publiſhed; and Pope was, I believe, more and more ſuſpected of writing them; at laſt, in 1734, he avowed the fourth, and claimed the honour of a moral poet.

In the concluſion it is ſufficiently acknowledged, that the doctrine of the *Eſſay on Man* was received from Bolingbroke, who is ſaid to have ridiculed Pope, among thoſe who enjoyed his confidence, as having adopted and advanced principles of which he did not perceive the conſequence, and as blindly propagating opinions contrary to his own. That thoſe communications had been conſolidated into a ſcheme regularly drawn, and delivered to Pope, from whom it returned only transformed from proſe to verſe, has been reported, but hardly can be true. The Eſſay plainly appears the fabric of a poet: what Bolingbroke ſupplied could be only the firſt principles; the order, illuſtration, and embelliſhments muſt all be Pope's.

Theſe principles it is not my buſineſs to clear from obſcurity, dogmatiſm, or falſehood; but they were not im-

mediately examined; philoſophy and poetry have not often the ſame readers; and the eſſay abounded in ſplendid amplifications and ſparkling ſentences, which were read and admired, with no great attention to their ultimate purpoſe; its flowers caught the eye, which did not ſee what the gay foliage concealed, and for a time flouriſhed in the ſunſhine of univerſal approbation. So little was any evil tendency diſcovered, that, as innocence is unſuſpicious, many read it for a manual of piety.

Its reputation ſoon invited a tranſlator. It was firſt turned into French proſe, and afterwards by Reſnel into verſe. Both tranſlations fell into the hands of Crouſaz, who firſt, when he had the verſion in proſe, wrote a general cenſure, and afterwards reprinted Reſnel's verſion, with particular remarks upon every paragraph.

Crouſaz was a profeſſor of Switzerland, eminent for his treatiſe of Logic, and his *Examen de Pyrrhonisme*, and, however little known or regarded here, was no mean antagoniſt. His mind was one of thoſe in which philoſophy and piety are happily united. He was accuſtomed to argument and diſquiſition, and perhaps was grown too deſirous of detecting faults; but his intentions were always right, his opinions were ſolid, and his religion pure.

His inceſſant vigilance for the promotion of piety diſpoſed him to look with diſtruſt upon all metaphyſical ſyſtems of Theology, and all ſchemes of virtue and happineſs purely rational; and therefore it was not long before he was perſuaded that the poſitions of Pope, as they terminated for the moſt part in natural religion, were intended to draw mankind away from revelation, and to repreſent the whole courſe of things as a neceſſary concatenation of indiſſoluble fatality; and it is undeniable, that in many paſſages a religious eye may eaſily diſcover expreſſions not very favourable to morals, or to liberty.

About this time Warburton began to make his appearance in the firſt ranks of learning. He was a man of vigorous faculties, a mind fervid and vehement, ſupplied by inceſſant and unlimited enquiry, with wonderful extent and variety of knowledge, which yet had not oppreſſed his imagination, nor clouded his perſpicacity. To every work he brought a memory full fraught, together with a fancy fertile of original combinations, and at once exerted the powers of the ſcholar, the reaſoner, and the wit. But his knowledge was too multifarious to be always exact, and his

purſuits were too eager to be always cautious. His abilities gave him an haughty confidence, which he diſdained to conceal or mollify; and his impatience of oppoſition diſpoſed him to treat his adverſaries with ſuch contemptuous ſuperiority as made his readers commonly his enemies, and excited againſt the advocate the wiſhes of ſome who favoured the cauſe. He ſeems to have adopted the Roman Emperor's determination, *oderint dum metuant;* he uſed no allurements of gentle language, but wiſhed to compel rather than perſuade.

His ſtyle is copious without ſelection, and forcible without neatneſs; he took the words that preſented themſelves; his diction is coarſe and impure, and his ſentences are unmeaſured.

He had, in the early part of his life, pleaſed himſelf with the notice of inferior wits, and correſponded with the enemies of Pope. A Letter was produced, when he had perhaps himſelf forgotten it, in which he tells *Caneanen*, "Dryden *I obſerve borrows for want of leiſure, and* Pope *for want of genius:* Milton *out of pride, and* Addiſon *out of modeſty.*" And when Theobald publiſhed *Shakſpeare*, in oppoſition to Pope, the beſt notes were ſupplied by Warburton.

But the time was now come when Warburton was to change his opinion, and Pope was to find a defender in him who had contributed ſo much to the exaltation of his rival.

The arrogance of Warburton excited againſt him every artifice of offence, and therefore it may be ſuppoſed that his union with Pope was cenſured as hypocritical inconſtancy; but ſurely to think differently, at different times, of poetical merit, may be eaſily allowed. Such opinions are often admitted, and diſmiſſed, without nice examination. Who is there that has not found reaſon for changing his mind about queſtions of greater importance?

Warburton, whatever was his motive, undertook, without ſolicitation, to reſcue Pope from the talons of Crouſaz, by freeing him from the imputation of favouring fatality, or rejecting revelation; and from month to month continued a vindication of the *Eſſay on Man*, in the literary journal of that time called *The Republic of Letters.*

Pope, who probably began to doubt the tendency of his own work, was glad that the poſitions, of which he perceived himſelf not to know the full meaning, could by any

mode of interpretation be made to mean well. How much he was pleaſed with his gratuitous defender, the following Letter evidently ſhews:

"SIR, March 24, 1743.

"I have juſt received from Mr. R. two more of your Letters. It is in the greateſt hurry imaginable that I write this; but I cannot help thanking you in particular for your third Letter, which is ſo extremely clear, ſhort, and full, that I think Mr. Crouſaz ought never to have another anſwer, and deſerved not ſo good an one. I can only ſay, you do him too much honour, and me too much right, ſo odd as the expreſſion ſeems; for you have made my ſyſtem as clear as I ought to have done, and could not. It is indeed the ſame ſyſtem as mine, but illuſtrated with a ray of your own, as they ſay our natural body is the ſame ſtill when it is glorified. I am ſure I like it better than I did before, and ſo will every man elſe. I know I meant juſt what you explain; but I did not explain my own meaning ſo well as you. You underſtand me as well as I do myſelf: but you expreſs me better than I could expreſs myſelf. Pray accept the ſincereſt acknowledgments. I cannot but wiſh theſe Letters were put together in one Book, and intend (with your leave) to procure a tranſlation of part, at leaſt, of all of them in French; but I ſhall not proceed a ſtep without your conſent and opinion, &c."

By this fond and eager acceptance of an exculpatory commet, Pope teſtified that, whatever might be the ſeeming or real import of the principles which he had received from Bolingbroke, he had not intentionally attacked religion; and Bolingbroke, if he meant to make him without his own conſent an inſtrument of miſchief, found him now engaged with his eyes open on the ſide of truth.

It is known that Bolingbroke concealed from Pope his real opinions. He once diſcovered them to Mr. Hooke, who related them again to Pope, and was told by him that he muſt have miſtaken the meaning of what he heard; and Bolingbroke, when Pope's uneaſineſs incited him to deſire an explanation, declared that Hooke had miſunderſtood him.

Bolingbroke hated Warburton, who had drawn his pupil from him; and a little before Pope's death they had a diſpute, from which they parted with mutual averſion.

From this time Pope lived in the cloſeſt intimacy with his commentator, and amply rewarded his kindneſs and his zeal; for he introduced him to Mr. Murray, by whoſe intereſt he became preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and to Mr. Allen, who gave him his niece and his eſtate, and by conſequence a biſhopric. When he died, he left him the property of his works; a legacy which may be reaſonably eſtimated at four thouſand pounds.

Pope's fondneſs for the *Eſſay on Man* appeared by his deſire of its propagation. Dobſon, who had gained reputation by his verſion of Prior's *Solomon*, was employed by him to tranſlate it into Latin verſe, and was for that purpoſe ſome time at Twickenham; but he left his work, whatever was the reaſon, unfiniſhed; and by Benſon's invitation, undertook the longer taſk of *Paradiſe Loſt*. Pope then deſired his friend to find a ſcholar who ſhould turn his Eſſay into Latin proſe; but no ſuch performance has ever appeared.

Pope lived at this time *among the great*, with that reception and reſpect to which his works entitled him, and which he had not impaired by any private miſconduct or factious partiality. Though Bolingbroke was his friend, Walpole was not his enemy; but treated him with ſo much conſideration as, at his requeſt, to ſolicit and obtain from the French Miniſter an abbey for Mr. Southcot, whom he conſidered himſelf as obliged to reward, by this exertion of his intereſt, for the benefit which he had received from his attendance in a long illneſs.

It was ſaid, that, when the Court was at Richmond, Queen Caroline had declared her intention to viſit him. This may have been only a careleſs effuſion, thought on no more: the report of ſuch notice, however, was ſoon in many mouths; and, if I do not forget or miſapprehend Savage's account, Pope, pretending to decline what was not yet offered, left his houſe for a time, not, I ſuppoſe, for any other reaſon than leſt he ſhould be thought to ſtay at home in expectation of an honour which would not be conferred. He was therefore angry at Swift, who repreſents him as *refuſing the viſits of a Queen*, becauſe he knew that what had never been offered, had never been refuſed.

Beſide the general ſyſtem of morality ſuppoſed to be continued in the *Eſſay on Man*, it was his intention to write diſtinct poems upon the different duties or conditi-

ons of life; one of which is the Epiſtle to Lord Bathurſt (1733) on the *Use of Riches*, a piece on which he declared great labour to have been beſtowed*.

Into this poem ſome incidents are hiſtorically thrown, and ſome known characters are introduced, with others of which it is difficult to ſay how far they are real or fictitious; but the praiſe of *Kyrl*, the *Man of Ross*, deſerves particular examination, who, after a long and pompous enumeration of his public works and private charities, is ſaid to have diffuſed all thoſe bleſſings from *five hundred a year*. Wonders are willingly told, and willingly heard. The truth is, that *Kyrl* was a man of known integrity, and active benevolence, by whoſe ſolicitation the wealthy were perſuaded to pay contributions to his charitable ſchemes; this influence he obtained by an example of liberality exerted to the utmoſt extent of his power, and was thus enabled to give more than he had. This account Mr. *Victor* received from the miniſter of the place, and I have preſerved it, that the praiſe of a good man being made more credible, may be more ſolid. Narrations of romantic and impracticable virtue will be read with wonder, but that which is unattainable is recommended in vain; that good may be endeavoured, it muſt be ſhewn to be poſſible.

This is the only piece in which the author has given a hint of his religion, by ridiculing the ceremony of burning the pope, and by mentioning with ſome indignation the inſcription on the Monument.

When this poem was firſt publiſhed, the dialogue, having no letters of direction, was perplexed and obſcure. Pope ſeems to have written with no very diſtinct idea; for he calls that an *Epistle to Bathurst*, in which Bathurſt is introduced as ſpeaking.

He afterwards (1734) inſcribed to Lord Cobham his *Characters of Men*, written with cloſe attention to the operations of the mind and modifications of life. In this poem he has endeavoured to eſtabliſh and exemplify his favourite theory of the *Ruling Passion*, by which he means an original direction of deſire to ſome particular object, an innate affection which gives all action a determinate and invariable tendency, and operates upon the whole ſyſtem of life, either openly, or more ſecretly by the intervention of ſome accidental or ſubordinate propenſion.

* *Spence.*

Of any paſſion, thus innate and irreſiſtible, the exiſtence may reaſonably be doubted. Human characters are by no means conſtant; men change by change of place, of fortune, of acquaintance; he who is at one time a lover of pleaſure, is at another a lover of money. Thoſe indeed who attain any excellence, commonly ſpend life in one purſuit; for excellence is not often gained upon eaſier terms. But to the particular ſpecies of excellence men are directed, not by an aſcendant planet or predominating humour, but by the firſt book which they read, ſome early converſation which they heard, or ſome accident which excited ardour and emulation.

It muſt be at leaſt allowed that this *Ruling Paſſion*, antecedent to reaſon and obſervation, muſt have an object independent on human contrivance; for there can be no natural deſire of artificial good. No man therefore can be born, in the ſtrict acceptation, a lover of money; for he may be born where money does not exiſt; nor can he be born, in a moral ſenſe, a lover of his country; for ſociety, politically regulated, is a ſtate contradiſtinguiſhed from a ſtate of nature; and any attention to that coalition of intereſts which makes the happineſs of a country, is poſſible only to thoſe whom enquiry and reflection have enabled to comprehend it.

This doctrine is in itſelf pernicious as well as falſe; its tendency is to produce the belief of a kind of moral predeſtination, or over ruling principle which cannot be reſiſted; he that admits it, is prepared to comply with every deſire that caprice or opportunity ſhall excite, and to flatter himſelf that he ſubmits only to the lawful dominion of Nature, in obeying the reſiſtleſs authority of his *Ruling Paſſion*.

Pope has formed his theory with ſo little ſkill, that in the examples by which he illuſtrates and confirms it, he has confounded paſſions, appetites, and habits.

To the *Characters of Men* he added ſoon after, in an epiſtle ſuppoſed to have been addreſſed to Martha Blount, but which the laſt edition has taken from her, the *Characters of Women*. This poem, which was laboured with great diligence and in the author's opinion with great ſucceſs, was neglected at its firſt publication, as the commentator ſuppoſes, becauſe the public was informed by an advertiſement, that it contained *no Character drawn from the Life*; an aſſertion which Pope probably did not expect or wiſh to have been believed, and which he ſoon gave his readers

ſufficient reaſon to diſtruſt, by telling them in a note, that the work was imperfect, becauſe part of his ſubject was *Vice too high* to be yet expoſed.

The time however ſoon came, in which it was ſafe to diſplay the Ducheſs of Marlborough under the name of *Atoſſa;* and her character was inſerted with no great honour to the writer's gratitude.

He publiſhed from time to time (between 1730 and 1740) Imitations of different poems of Horace, generally with his name, and once as was ſuſpected without it. What he was upon moral principles aſhamed to own, he ought to have ſuppreſſed. Of theſe pieces it is uſeleſs to ſettle the dates, as they had ſeldom much relation to the times, and perhaps had been long in his hands.

This mode of imitation, in which the ancients are familiariſed, by adopting their ſentiments to modern topics, by making Horace ſay of Shakſpeare what he originally ſaid of Ennius, and accommodating his ſatires on Pantolabus and Nomentanus to the flatterers and prodigals of our own time, was firſt practiſed in the reign of Charles the Second by Oldham and Rocheſter, at leaſt I remember no inſtances more ancient. It is a kind of middle compoſition between tranſlation and original deſign, which pleaſes when the thoughts are unexpectedly applicable, and the parallels lucky. It ſeems to have been Pope's favourite amuſement; for he has carried it further than any former poet.

He publiſhed likewiſe a revival, in ſmoother numbers, of Dr. Donne's Satires, which was recommended to him by the Duke of Shrewſbury and the Earl of Oxford. They made no great impreſſion on the public. Pope ſeems to have known their imbecillity, and therefore ſuppreſſed them while he was yet contending to riſe in reputation, but ventured them when he thought their deficiencies more likely to be imputed to Donne than to himſelf.

The Epiſtle to Dr. Arbuthnot, which ſeems to be derived in its firſt deſign from Boileau's Addreſs *a ſon Eſprit*, was publiſhed in January 1735, about a month before the death of him to whom it is inſcribed. It is to be regretted that either honour or pleaſure ſhould have been miſſed by Arbuthnot; a man eſtimable for his learning, amiable for his life, and venerable for his piety.

Arbuthnot was a man of great comprehenſion, ſkilful in his profeſſion, verſed in the ſciences, acquainted with anci-

ent literature, and able to animate his mafs of knowledge by a bright and active imagination; a fcholar with great brilliancy of wit; a wit, who, in the crowd of life, retained and difcovered a noble ardour of religious zeal.

In this poem Pope feems to reckon with the public. He vindicates himfelf from cenfures; and with dignity, rather than arrogance, enforces his own claims to kindnefs and refpect.

Into this poem are interwoven feveral paragraphs which had been before printed as a fragment, and among them the fatirical lines upon Addifon, of which the laft couplet has been twice corrected. It was at firft,

> Who would not fmile if fuch a man there be?
> Who would not laugh if Addifon were he?

Then,

> Who would not grieve if fuch a man there be?
> Who would not laugh if Addifon were he?

At laft it is,

> Who but muft laugh if fuch a man there be?
> Who would not weep if Atticus were he?

He was at this time at open war with Lord Hervey, who had diftinguifhed himfelf as a fteady adherent to the Miniftry; and, being offended with a contemptuous anfwer to one of his pamphlets, had fummoned Pulteney to a duel. Whether he or Pope made the firft attack, perhaps cannot now be eafily known: he had written an invective againft Pope, whom he calls, *Hard as thy heart, and as thy birth obfcure;* and hints that his father was a *hatter*. To this Pope wrote a reply in verfe and profe: the verfes are in this poem; and the profe, though it was never fent, is printed among his Letters, but to a cool reader of the prefent time exhibits nothing but tedious malignity.

His laft Satires, of the general kind, were two Dialogues, named from the year in which they were publifhed *Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-eight*. In thefe poems many are praifed and many are reproached. Pope was then entangled in the oppofition; a follower of the Prince of Wales, who dined at his houfe, and the friend of many who obftructed and cenfured the conduct of the Minifters. His political partiality was too plainly fhewn; he forgot the

prudence with which he paſſed, in his earlier years, uninjured and unoffended through much more violent conflicts of faction.

In the firſt Dialogue, having an opportunity of praiſing Allen of Bath, he aſked his leave to mention him as a man not illuſtrious by any merit of his anceſtors, and called him in his verſes *low-born Allen*. Men are ſeldom ſatisfied with praiſe introduced or followed by any mention of defect. Allen ſeems not to have taken any pleaſure in his epithet, which was afterwards ſoftened into *humble Allen*.

In the ſecond Dialogue, he took ſome liberty with one of the *Foxes*, among others; which *Fox* in a reply to Lyttleton, took an opportunity of repaying, by reproaching him with the friendſhip of a lampooner, who ſcattered his ink without fear or decency, and againſt whom he hoped the reſentment of the Legiſlature would quickly be diſcharged.

About this time Paul Whitehead, a ſmall poet, was ſummoned before the Lords for a poem called *Manners*, togegether with Dodſley his publiſher. Whitehead who hung looſe upon ſociety, ſculked and eſcaped; but Dodſley's ſhop and family made his appearance neceſſary. He was, however, ſoon diſmiſſed; and the whole proceſs was probably intended rather to intimidate Pope than to puniſh Whitehead.

Pope never afterwards attempted to join the patriot with the poet, nor drew his pen upon ſtateſmen. That he deſiſted from his attempts of reformation is imputed, by his commentator, to his deſpair of prevailing over the corruption of the time. He was not likely to have been ever of opinion that the dread of his ſatire would countervail the love of power or of money; he pleaſed himſelf with being important and formidable, and gratified ſometimes his pride, and ſometimes his reſentment; till at laſt he began to think he ſhould be more ſafe, if he were leſs buſy.

The *Memoirs of Scriblerus*, publiſhed about this time extend only to the firſt book of a work, projected in concert by Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, who uſed to meet in the time of Queen Anne, and denominated themſelves the *Scriblerus Club*. Their purpoſe was to cenſure the abuſes of learning by a fictitious Life of an infatuated Scholar.—They were diſperſed; the deſign was never completed; and Warburton laments its miſcarriage, as an event very diſaſtrous to polite letters.

If the whole may be eſtimated by this ſpecimen, which ſeems to be the production of Arbuthnot, with a few touches perhaps by Pope, the want of more will not be much lamented; for the follies which the writer ridicules are ſo little practiſed, that they are not known; nor can the ſatire be underſtood but by the learned: he raiſes phantoms of abſurdity, and then drives them away. He cures diſeaſes that were never felt.

For this reaſon this joint production of three great writers has never obtained any notice from mankind; it has been little read, or when read has been forgotten, as no man could be wiſer, better, or merrier, by remembering it.

The deſign cannot boaſt of much originality; for beſides its general reſemblance to *Don Quixote* there will be found in it particular imitations of the Hiſtory of Mr. *Ouffle*.

Swift carried ſo much of it into Ireland as ſupplied him with hints for his *Travels*; and with thoſe the world might have been contented, though the reſt had been ſuppreſſed.

Pope had fought for images and ſentiments in a region not known to have been explored by many other of the Engliſh writers; he had conſulted the modern writers of Latin poetry, a claſs of authors whom Boileau endeavoured to bring into contempt, and who are too generally neglected. Pope, however, was not aſhamed of their acquaintance, nor ungrateful for the advantages which he might have derived from it. A ſmall ſelection from the Italians who wrote in Latin, had been publiſhed at London, about the latter end of the laſt century, by a man who concealed his name, but whom his Preface ſhews to have been well qualified for his undertaking. This collection Pope amplified by more than half, and (1740) publiſhed it in two volumes, but injuriouſly omittted his predeceſſor's preface. To theſe books, which had nothing but the mere text, no regard was paid, the authors were ſtill neglected, and the editor was neither praiſed nor cenſured.

He did not ſink into idleneſs; he had planned a work, which he conſidered as ſubſequent to his *Eſſay on Man*, of which he has given this account to Dr. Swift.

"March 25, 1736.

"If ever I write any more Epiſtles in verſe, one of them ſhall be addreſſed to you. I have long concerted it, and begun it; but I would make what bears your name as finiſhed as my laſt work ought to be, that is to ſay, more finiſhed than any of the reſt. The ſubject is large and will divide into four Epiſtles, which naturally follow the *Eſſay on Man*, viz. 1. Of the Extent and Limits of Human Reaſon and Science. 2. A View of the uſeful and therefore attainable, and of the unuſeful and therefore of the unattainable Arts. 3. Of the Nature, Ends, Application, and Uſe of different Capacities. 4. Of the Uſe of *Learning*, of the *Science*, of the *World*, and of *Wit*. It will conclude with a ſatire againſt the Miſapplication of all theſe, exemplified by Pictures, Characters, and Examples."

This work in its full extent, being now afflicted with an aſthma, and finding the powers of life gradually declining, he had no longer courage to undertake; but, from the materials which he had provided, he added, at Warburton's requeſt, another book to the *Dunciad*, of which the deſign is to ridicule ſuch ſtudies as are either hopeleſs or uſeleſs, as either purſue what is unattainable, or what, if it be attained, is of no uſe.

When this book was printed (1742) the laurel had been for ſome time upon the head of Cibber; a man whom it cannot be ſuppoſed that Pope could regard with much kindneſs or eſteem, though in one of the Imitations of *Horace* he has liberally enough praiſed the *Careleſs Huſband*. In the *Dunciad*, among other worthleſs ſcribblers, he had mentioned Cibber; who, in his *Apology*, complains of the great poet's unkindneſs as more injurious, *becauſe*, ſays he, *I never have offended him.*

It might have been expected that Pope ſhould have been, in ſome degree, mollified by this ſubmiſſive gentleneſs; but no ſuch conſequence appeared. Though he condeſcended to commend Cibber once, he mentioned him afterwards contemptuouſly in one of his Satires, and again in his Epiſtle to Arbuthnot; and in the fourth book of the *Dunciad* attacked him with acrimony, to which the provocation is not eaſily diſcoverable. Perhaps he imagined that, in ridiculing the Laureat, he ſatiriſed thoſe by whom the laurel had been given, and gratified that ambitious petulance with which he affected to inſult the great.

The ſeverity of this ſatire left Cibber no longer any patience. He had confidence enough in his own powers to believe that he could diſturb the quiet of his adverſary, and doubtleſs did not want inſtigators, who, without any care about the victory, deſired to amuſe themſelves by looking on the conteſt. He therefore gave the town a pamphlet, in which he declares his reſolution from that time never to bear another blow without returning it, and to tire out his adverſary by perſeverance, if he cannot conquer him by ſtrength.

The inceſſant and unappeaſable malignity of Pope he imputes to a very diſtant cauſe. After the *Three Hours after Marriage* had been driven off the ſtage, by the offence which the mummy and crocodile gave the audience, while the exploded ſcene was yet freſh in memory, it happened that Cibber played *Bayes* in the *Rehearsal:* and, as it had been uſual to enliven the part by the mention of any recent theatrical tranſactions, he ſaid, that he once thought to have introduced his lovers diſguiſed in a Mummy and a Crocodile. "This," ſays he, "was received with loud claps, which indicated contempt of the play." Pope, was behind the ſcenes, meeting him as he left the ſtage, attacked him, as he ſays, with all the virulence of a *Wit out of his senses;* to which he replied, "that he would take no other notice of what was ſaid by ſo particular a man than to declare, that, as often as he played that part, he would repeat the ſame provocation."

He ſhews his opinion to be, that Pope was one of the authors of the play which he ſo zealouſly defended; and adds an idle ſtory of Pope's behaviour at a tavern.

The pamphlet was written with little power of thought or language, and, if ſuffered to remain without notice, would have been very ſoon forgotten. Pope had now been enough acquainted with human life to know, if his paſſion had not been too powerful for his underſtanding, that, from a contention like his with Cibber, the world ſeeks nothing but diverſion, which is given at the expence of the higher character. When Cibber lampooned Popes curioſity was excited; what Pope would ſay of Cibber nobody enquired, but in hope that Pope's aſperity might betray his pain and leſſen his dignity.

He ſhould therefore have ſuffered the pamphlet to flutter and die, without confeſſing that it ſtung him. The diſhonour of being ſhewn as Cibber's antagoniſt could never be

compenſated by the victory. Cibber had nothing to loſe; when Pope had exhauſted all his malignity upon him, he would riſe in the eſteem both of his friends and his enemies. Silence only could have made him deſpicable; the blow which did not appear to be felt, would have been ſtruck in vain.

But Pope's irraſcibility prevailed, and he reſolved to tell the whole Engliſh world that he was at war with Cibber; and to ſhew that he thought him no common adverſary, he prepared no common vengeance; he publiſhed a new edition of the *Dunciad*, in which he degraded *Theobald* from his painful pre-eminence, and enthroned *Cibber* in his ſtead. Unhappily the two heroes were of oppoſite characters, and Pope was unwilling to loſe what he had already written; he has therefore depraved his poem by giving to Cibber the old books, the cold pedantry and ſluggiſh pertinacity of Theobald.

Pope was ignorant enough of his own intereſt, to make another change, and introduced Oſborne contending for the prize among the bookſellers. Oſborne was a man entirely deſtitute of ſhame, without ſenſe of any diſgrace but that of poverty. He told me, when he was doing that which raiſed Pope's reſentment, that he ſhould be put into the *Dunciad;* but he had the fate of *Caſſandra;* I gave no credit to his prediction, till in time I ſaw it accompliſhed. The ſhafts of ſatire were directed equally in vain againſt Cibber and Oſborne; being repelled by the impenetrable impudence of one, and deadened by the impaſſive dulneſs of the other. Pope confeſſed his own pain by his anger; but he gave no pain to thoſe who had provoked him. He was able to hurt none but himſelf; by transferring the ſame ridicule from one to another, he deſtroyed its efficacy; for, by ſhewing that what he had ſaid of one he was ready to ſay of another, he reduced himſelf to the inſignificance of his own magpye, who from his cage calls cuckold at a venture.

Cibber, according to his engagement, repaid the *Dunciad* with another pamphlet, which, Pope ſaid, *would be as good as a doſe of hartſhorn to him;* but his tongue and his heart were at variance. I have heard Mr. Richardſon relate, that he attended his father the painter on a viſit, when one of Cibber's pamphlets came into the hands of Pope, who ſaid, *Theſe things are my diverſion.* They ſat by him while he peruſed it, and ſaw his features writhen with an-

guiſh; and young Richardſon ſaid to his father, when they returned, that he hoped to be preſerved from ſuch diverſion as had been that day the lot of Pope.

From this time, finding his diſeaſes more oppreſſive, and his vital powers gradually declining, he no longer ſtrained his faculties with any original compoſition, nor propoſed any other employment for his remaining life, than the reviſal and correction of his former works; in which he received advice and aſſiſtance from Warburton, whom he appears to have truſted and honoured in the higheſt degree.

He laid aſide his Epic Poem, perhaps without much loſs to mankind; for his hero was *Brutus* the Trojan, who, according to a ridiculous fiction, eſtabliſhed a colony in Britain. The ſubject therefore was of the fabulous age; the actors were a race upon whom imagination has been exhauſted, and attention wearied, and to whom the mind will not eaſily be recalled, when it is invited in blank verſe, which Pope had adopted with great imprudence, and, I think, without due conſideration of the nature of our language. The ſketch is, at leaſt in part, preſerved by Ruffhead; by which it appears, that Pope was thoughtleſs enough to model the names of his heroes with terminations not conſiſtent with the time or country in which he places them.

He lingered through the next year; but perceived himſelf, as he expreſſes it, *going down the hill.* He had for at leaſt five years been afflicted with an aſthma, and other diſorders, which his phyſicians were unable to relieve. Towards the end of his life he conſulted Dr. Thomſon, a man who had, by large promiſes, and free cenſures of the common practice of phyſic, forced himſelf up into ſudden reputation. Thomſon declared his diſtemper to be a dropſy, and evacuated part of the water by tincture of jalap; but confeſſed that his belly did not ſubſide. Thomſon had many enemies, and Pope was perſuaded to diſmiſs him.

While he was yet capable of amuſement and converſation, as he was one day ſitting in the air with Lord Bolingbroke and Lord Marchmont, he ſaw his favourite Martha Blount at the bottom of the terrace, and aſked Lord Bolingbroke to go and hand her up. Bolingbroke, not liking his errand, croſſed his legs, and ſat ſtill; but Lord Marchmont, who was younger and leſs captious, waited on the Lady; who, when he came to her, aſked, *What, is he not dead yet?* She is ſaid to have neglected him, with ſhameful

unkindneſs, in the latter time of his decay; yet, of the little which he had to leave, ſhe had a very great part. Their acquaintance began early; the life of each was pictured on the other's mind; their converſation therefore was endearing, for when they met, there was an immediate coalition of congenial notions. Perhaps he conſidered her unwillingneſs to approach the chamber of ſickneſs as female weakneſs, or human frailty; perhaps he was conſcious to himſelf of peeviſhneſs and impatience, or, though he was offended by her inattention, might yet conſider her merit as overbalancing her fault; and, if he had ſuffered his heart to be alienated from her, he could have found nothing that might fill her place; he could have only ſhrunk within himſelf; it was too late to transfer his confidence or fondneſs.

In May 1744, his death was approaching*; on the ſixth, he was all day delirious, which he mentioned four days afterwards as a ſufficient humiliation of the vanity of man; he afterwards complained of ſeeing things as through a curtain, and in falſe colours; and one day, in the preſence of Dodſley, aſked what arm it was that came out from the wall. He ſaid, that his greateſt inconvenience was inability to think.

Bolingbroke ſometimes wept over him in this ſtate of helpleſs decay; and being told by Spence, that Pope, at the intermiſſion of his delirioufneſs, was always ſaying ſomething kind either of his preſent or abſent friends, and that his humanity ſeemed to have ſurvived his underſtanding, anſwered, "It has ſo." And added, "I never in my life knew a man that had ſo tender a heart for his particular friends, or more general friendſhip for mankind." At another time he ſaid, "I have known Pope theſe thirty years, and value myſelf more in his friendſhip than"—his grief then ſuppreſſed his voice.

Pope expreſſed undoubting confidence of a future ſtate. Being aſked by his friend Mr. Hooke, a papiſt, whether he would not die like his father and mother, and whether a prieſt ſhould not be called, he anſwered, "I do not think it eſſential, but it will be very right; and I thank you for putting me in mind of it."

In the morning, after the prieſt had given him the laſt ſacrament, he ſaid, "There is nothing that is meritorious

* *Spence.*

but virtue and friendſhip, and indeed friendſhip itſelf is only a part of virtue."

He died in the evening of the thirtieth day of May, 1744, ſo placidly, that the attendants did not diſcern the the exact time of his expiration. He was buried at Twickenham, near his father and mother, where a monument has been erected to him by his commentator, the Biſhop of Glouceſter.

He left the care of his papers to his executors, firſt to Lord Bolingbroke, and if he ſhould not be living to the Earl of Marchmont, undoubtedly expecting them to be proud of the truſt, and eager to extend his fame. But let no man dream of influence beyond his life. After a decent time, Dodſley the bookſeller went to ſolicit preference as the publiſher, and was told that the parcel had not been yet inſpected; and whatever was the reaſon, the world has been diſappointed of what was *reſerved for the next age.*

He loſt, indeed, the favour of Bolingbroke by a kind of poſthumous offence. The political pamphlet called *The Patriot King*, had been put into his hands that he might procure the impreſſion of a very few copies, to be diſtributed according to the author's direction among his friends, and Pope aſſured him that no more had been printed than were allowed; but, ſoon after his death, the printer brought and reſigned a complete edition of fifteen hundred copies, which Pope had ordered him to print, and to retain in ſecret. He kept, as was obſerved, his engagement to Pope better than Pope had kept it to his friend; and nothing was known of the tranſaction, till, upon the death of his employer, he thought himſelf obliged to deliver the books to the right owner, who, with great indignation, made a fire in his yard, and delivered the whole impreſſion to the flames.

Hitherto nothing had been done which was not naturally dictated by reſentment of violated faith; reſentment more acrimonious, as the violator had been more loved or more truſted. But here the anger might have ſtopped; the injury was private, and there was little danger from the example.

Bolingbroke, however, was not yet ſatisfied; his thirſt of vengeance excited him to blaſt the memory of the man over whom he had wept in his laſt ſtruggles; and he employed Mallet, another friend of Pope, to tell the tale to the public, with all its aggravations. Warburton, whoſe

heart was warm with his legacy, and tender by the recent ſeparation, thought it proper for him to interpoſe; and undertook, not indeed to vindicate the action, for breach of truſt has always ſomething criminal, but to extenuate it by an apology. Having advanced what cannot be denied, that moral obliquity is made more or leſs excuſable by the motives that produce it, he enquires what evil purpoſe could have induced Pope to break his promiſe. He could not delight his vanity by uſurping the work, which, though not ſold in ſhops, had been ſhewn to a number more than ſufficient to preſerve the author's claim; he could not gratify his avarice; for he could not ſell his plunder till Bolingbroke was dead; and even then, if the copy was left to another, his fraud would be defeated, and if left to himſelf, would be uſeleſs.

Warburton therefore ſuppoſes, with great appearance of reaſon, that the irregularity of his conduct proceeded wholly from his zeal for Bolingbroke, who might perhaps have deſtroyed the pamphlet, which Pope thought it his duty to preſerve, even without its author's approbation. To this apology an anſwer was written in a *Letter to the most impudent man living.*

He brought ſome reproach upon his own memory by the petulant and contemptuous mention made in his will of Mr. Allen, and an affected repayment of his benefactions. Mrs. Blount, as the known friend and favourite of Pope, had been invited to the houſe of Allen, where ſhe comported herſelf with ſuch indecent arrogance, that ſhe parted from Mrs. Allen in a ſtate of irreconcileable diſlike, and the door was for ever barred againſt her. This excluſion ſhe reſented with ſo much bitterneſs as to refuſe any legacy from Pope, unleſs he left the world with a diſavowal of obligation to Allen. Having been long under her dominion, now tottering in the decline of life, and unable to reſiſt the violence of her temper, or, perhaps with the prejudice of a lover, perſuaded that ſhe had ſuffered improper treatment, he complied with her demand, and polluted his will with female reſentment. Allen accepted the legacy, which he gave to the Hoſpital at Bath; obſerving that Pope was always a bad accomptant, and that if to 150*l.* he had put a cypher more, he had come nearer to the truth.

THE perſon of POPE is well known not to have been formed by the niceſt model. He has, in his account of the *Litte Club*, compared himſelf to a ſpider, and by another is deſcribed as protuberant behind and before. He is ſaid to have been beautiful in his infancy; but he was of a conſtitution originally feeble and weak; and as bodies of a tender frame are eaſily diſtorted, his deformity was probably in part the effect of his application. His ſtature was ſo low, that, to bring him to a level with common tables, it was neceſſary to raiſe his ſeat. But his face was not diſpleaſing, and his eyes were animated and vivid.

By natural deformity, or accidental diſtortion, his vital functions were ſo much diſordered, that his life was a *long diſeaſe*. His moſt frequent aſſailant was the headach, which he uſed to relieve by inhaling the ſteam of coffee, which he very frequently required.

Moſt of what can be told concerning his petty peculiarities was communicated by a female domeſtic of the Earl of Oxford, who knew him perhaps after the middle of life. He was then ſo weak as to ſtand in perpetual need of female attendance; extremely ſenſible of cold, ſo that he wore a kind of fur doublet, under a ſhirt of very coarſe warm linen with fine ſleeves. When he roſe, he was inveſted in boddice made of ſtiff canvaſs, being ſcarce able to hold himſelf erect till they were laced, and he then put on a flannel waiſtcoat. One ſide was contracted. His legs were ſo ſlender, that he enlarged their bulk with three pair of ſtockings, which were drawn on and off by the maid; for he was not able to dreſs or undreſs himſelf, and neither went to bed nor roſe without help. His weakneſs made it very difficult for him to be clean.

His hair had fallen almoſt all away; and he uſed to dine ſometimes with Lord Oxford, privately, in a velvet cap. His dreſs of ceremony was black with a tye-wig, and a little ſword.

The indulgence and accommodation which his ſickneſs required, had taught him all the unpleaſing and unſocial qualities of a valetudinary man. He expected that every thing ſhould give way to his eaſe or humour, as a child, whoſe parents will not hear her cry, has an unreſiſted dominion in the nurſery.

C'eſt que l'enfant toujours eſt homme,
C'eſt que l'homme eſt toujours enfant.

When he wanted to ſleep he *nodded in company;* and once ſlumbered at his own table while the Prince of Wales was talking of poetry,

The reputation which his friendſhip gave, procured him many invitations; but he was a very troubleſome inmate. He brought no ſervant, and had ſo many wants, that a numerous attendance was ſcarcely able to ſupply them. Wherever he was, he left no room for another, becauſe he exacted the attention, and employed the activity of the whole family. His errands were ſo frequent and frivolous, that the footmen in time avoided and neglected him; and the Earl of Oxford diſcharged ſome of the ſervants for their reſolute refuſal of his meſſages. The maids, when they had neglected their buſineſs, alledged that they had been employed by Mr. Pope. One of his conſtant demands was of coffee in the night, and to the woman that waited on him in his chamber he was very burthenſome; but he was careful to recompenſe her want of ſleep; and Lord Oxford's ſervant declared, that in a houſe where her buſineſs was to anſwer his call, ſhe would not aſk for wages.

He had another fault, eaſily incident to thoſe who, ſuffering much pain think themſelves entitled to whatever pleaſures they can ſnatch. He was too indulgent to his appetite; he loved meat highly ſeaſoned and of ſtrong taſte; and, at the intervals of the table, amuſed himſelf with biſcuit and dry conſerves. If he ſat down to a variety of diſhes, he would oppreſs his ſtomach with repletion and though he ſeemed angry when a dram was offered him, did not forbear to drink it. His friends, who knew the avenues to his heart, pampered him with preſents of luxury, which he did not ſuffer to ſtand neglected. The death of great men is not always proportioned to the luſtre of their lives. Hannibal, ſays Juvenal, did not periſh by a javelin or a ſword; the ſlaughters of Canæ were revenged by a ring. The death of Pope was imputed by ſome of his friends to a ſilver ſauce-pan, in which it was his delight to heat potted lampreys.

That he loved too well to eat, is certain; but that his ſenſuality ſhortened his life will not be haſtily concluded, when it is remembered that a conformation ſo irregular laſted ſix and fifty years, notwithſtanding ſuch pertinacious diligence of ſtudy and meditation.

In all his intercourſe with mankind, he had great delight in artifice, and endeavoured to attain all his purpoſes by indirect and unſuſpected methods. *He hardly drank tea without a ſtratagem.* If, at the houſe of his friends, he wanted accommodation, he was not willing to aſk for it in plain terms, but would mention it remotely as ſomething convenient; though, when it was procured, he ſoon made it appear for whoſe ſake it had been recommended. Thus he teized Lord Orrery till he obtained a ſcreen. He practiſed his arts on ſuch ſmall occaſions, that Lady Bolingbroke uſed to ſay, in a French phraſe, that *he plaid the politician about cabbages and turnips.* His unjuſtifiable impreſſion of the *Patriot King*, as it can be imputed to no particular motive, muſt have proceeded from his general habit of ſecrecy and cunning; he caught an opportunity of a ſly trick, and pleaſed himſelf with the thought of out-witting Bolingbroke.

In familiar or convivial converſation, it does not appear that he excelled. He may be ſaid to have reſembled Dryden, as being one that was diſtinguiſhed by vivacity in company. It is remarkable, that, ſo near his time, ſo much ſhould be known of what he has written, and ſo little of what he has ſaid: traditional memory retains no ſallies of raillery, nor ſentences of obſervation; nothing either pointed or ſolid, either wiſe or merry. One apophthegm only ſtands upon record. When an objection raiſed againſt his inſcription for Shakſpeare was defended by the authority of *Patrick*, he replied—"horreſco referens"—*that* "he would allow the publiſher of a Dictionary to know the meaning of a ſingle word, but not of two words put together."

He was fretful, and eaſily diſpleaſed, and allowed himſelf to be capriciouſly reſentful. He would ſometimes leave Lord Oxford ſilently, no one could tell why, and was to be courted back by more letters and meſſages than the footmen were willing to carry. The table was indeed infeſted by Lady Mary Wortley, who was the friend of Lady Oxford and who, knowing his peeviſhneſs, could by no intreaties be reſtrained from contradicting him, till their diſputes were ſharpened to ſuch aſperity, that one or the other quitted the houſe.

He ſometimes condeſcended to be jocular with ſervants or inferiors; but by no merriment, either of others or his own, was he ever ſeen excited to laughter.

Of his domeſtic character, frugality was a part eminently remarkable. Having determined not to be dependent, he determined not to be in want, and therefore wiſely and magnanimouſly rejected all temptations to expence unſuitable to his fortune. This general care muſt be univerſally approved; but it ſometimes appeared in petty artifices of parſimony, ſuch as the practice of writing his compoſitions on the back of letters, as may be ſeen in the remaining copy of the *Iliad*, by which perhaps in five years five ſhillings were ſaved; or in a niggardly reception of his friends and ſcantineſs of entertainment, as, when he had two gueſts in his houſe, he would ſet at ſupper a ſingle pint upon the table; and having himſelf taken two ſmall glaſſes would retire, and ſay, "Gentlemen I leave you to your wine." Yet he tells his friends, that "he has a heart for all, a houſe for all, and, whatever they may think, a fortune for all."

He ſometimes, however, made a ſplendid dinner, and is ſaid to have wanted no part of the ſkill or elegance which ſuch performances require. That this magnificence ſhould be often diſplayed, that obſtinate prudence with which he conducted his affairs would not permit; for his revenue, certain and caſual, amounted only to about eight hundred pounds a year, of which however he declares himſelf able to aſſign one hundred to charity.

Of this fortune, which as it aroſe from public approbation was very honourably obtained, his imagination ſeems to have been too full; it would be hard to find a man ſo well entitled to notice by his wit that ever delighted ſo much in talking of his money. In his Letters, and in his Poems, his garden and his grotto, his quincunx and his vines, or ſome hints of his opulence, are always to be found. The great topic of his ridicule is poverty; the crimes with which he reproaches his antagoniſts are their debts, their habitation in the Mint, and their want of a dinner. He ſeems to be of an opinion not very uncommon in the world that to want money is to want every thing.

Next to the pleaſure of contemplating his poſſeſſions, ſeems to be that of enumerating the men of high rank with whom he was acquainted, and whoſe notice he loudly proclaims not to have been obtained by any practiſes of meanneſs or ſervility; a boaſt which was never denied to be true, and to which very few poets have ever aſpired. Pope never ſet genius to ſale; he never flattered thoſe whom he

did not love, or praiſed thoſe whom he did not eſteem. Savage, however, remarked that he began a little to relax his dignity when he wrote a diſtich for *his Highness's dog*.

His admiration of the Great ſeems to have increaſed in the advance of life. He paſſed over peers and ſtateſmen to inſcribe his *Iliad* to Congreve, with a magnanimity of which the praiſe had been complete, had his friend's virtue been equal to his wit. Why he was choſen for ſo great an honour, it is not now poſſible to know; there is no trace in literary hiſtory of any particular intimacy between them. The name of Congreve appears in the Letters among thoſe of his other friends, but without any obſervable diſtinction or conſequence.

To his latter works, however, he took care to annex names dignified with titles, but was not very happy in his choice; for, except Lord Bathurſt, none of his noble friends were ſuch as that a good man would wiſh to have his intimacy with them known to poſterity; he can derive little honour from the notice of Cobham, Burlington, or Bolingbroke.

Of his ſocial qualities, if an eſtimate be made from his Letters, an opinion too favourable cannot eaſily be formed; they exhibit a perpetual and unclouded effulgence of general benevolence, and particular fondneſs. There is nothing but liberality, gratitude, conſtancy, and tenderneſs. It has been ſo long ſaid as to be commonly believed, that the true characters of men may be found in their Letters, and that he who writes to his friend lays his heart open before him. But the truth is, that ſuch were ſimple friendſhips of the *Golden Age*, and are now the friendſhips only of children. Very few can boaſt of hearts which they dare lay open to themſelves, and of which, by whatever accident expoſed, they do not ſhun a diſtinct and continued view; and, certainly, what we hide from ourſelves we do not ſhew to our friends. There is, indeed, no tranſaction which offers ſtronger temptations to fallacy and ſophiſtication than epiſtolary intercourſe. In the eagerneſs of converſation the firſt emotions of the mind often burſt out, before they are conſidered; in the tumult of buſineſs, intereſt and paſſion have their genuine effect; but a friendly Letter is a calm and deliberate performance, in the cool of leiſure, in the ſtillneſs of ſolitude, and ſurely no man ſits down to depreciate by deſign his own character.

Friendſhip has no tendency to ſecure veracity; for by whom can a man ſo much wiſh to be thought better than he is, as by him whoſe kindneſs he deſires to gain or keep? Even in writing to the world there is leſs conſtraint; the author is not confronted with his reader, and takes his chance of approbation among the different diſpoſitions of mankind; but a Letter is addreſſed to a ſingle mind, of which the prejudices and partialities are known; and muſt therefore pleaſe, if not by favouring them, by forbearing to oppoſe them.

To charge thoſe favourable repreſentations, which men give of their own minds, with the guilt of hypocritical falſehood, would ſhew more ſeverity that knowledge. The writer commonly believes himſelf. Almoſt every man's thoughts, while they are general, are right; and moſt hearts are pure, while temptation is away. It is eaſy to awaken generous ſentiments in privacy; to deſpiſe death when there is no danger; to glow with benevolence when there is nothing to be given. While ſuch ideas are formed they are felt, and ſelf-love does not ſuſpect the gleam of virtue to be the meteor of fancy.

If the Letters of Pope are conſidered merely as compoſitions, they ſeem to be premeditated and artificial. It is one thing to write becauſe there is ſomething which the mind wiſhes to diſcharge, and another, to ſolicit the imagination becauſe ceremony or vanity requires ſomething to be written. Pope confeſſes his early Letters to be vitiated with *affectation and ambition*: to know whether he diſentangled himſelf from theſe perverters of epiſtolary integrity, his book and his life muſt be ſet in compariſon.

One of his favourite topics is contempt of his own poetry. For this, if it had been real, he would deſerve no commendation, and in this he was certainly not ſincere; for his high value of himſelf was ſufficiently obſerved, and of what could he be proud but of his poetry? He writes, he ſays, when *he has just nothing else to do;* yet Swift complains that he was never at leiſure for converſation, becauſe he *had always some poetical scheme in his head.* It was punctually required that his writing-box ſhould be ſet upon his bed before he roſe; and Lord Oxford's domeſtic related, that, in the dreadful winter of Forty, ſhe was called from her bed by him four times in one night, to ſupply him with paper, leſt he ſhould loſe a thought.

He pretends inſenſibility to cenſure and criticiſm, though it was obſerved by all who knew him that every pamphlet diſturbed his quiet, and that his extreme irritability laid him open to perpetual vexation; but he wiſhed to deſpiſe his critics, and therefore hoped that he did deſpiſe them.

As he happened to live in two reigns when the Court paid little attention to poetry, he nurſed in his mind a fooliſh diſeſteem of Kings, and proclaims that *he never sees Courts*. Yet a little regard ſhewn him by the prince of Wales melted his obduracy; and he had not much to ſay when he was aſked by his Royal Highneſs, *how he could love a Prince while he disliked Kings?*

He very frequently profeſſes contempt of the world, and repreſents himſelf as looking on mankind, ſometimes with gay indifference, as on emmets of a hilloc, below his ſerious attention; and ſometimes with gloomy indignation, as on monſters more worthy of hatred than of pity. Theſe were diſpoſitions apparently counterfeited. How could he deſpiſe thoſe whom he lived by pleaſing, and on whoſe approbation his eſteem of himſelf was ſuperſtructed? Why ſhould he hate thoſe to whoſe favour he owed his honour and his eaſe? Of things that terminate in human life, the world is the proper judge; to deſpiſe its ſentence, if it were poſſible, is not juſt; and if it were juſt, is not poſſible. Pope was far enough from this unreaſonable temper; he was ſufficiently *a fool to Fame*, and his fault was that he pretended to neglect it. His levity and his ſullenneſs were only in his Letters; he paſſed through common life, ſometimes vexed, and ſometimes pleaſed, with the natural emotions of common men.

His ſcorn of the Great is repeated too often to be real; no man thinks much of that which he deſpiſes; and as falſehood is always in danger of inconſiſtency, he makes it his boaſt at another time that he lives among them.

It is evident that his own importance ſwells often in his mind. He is afraid of writing, leſt the clerks of the Poſt-office ſhould know his ſecrets; he has many enemies; he conſiders himſelf as ſurrounded by univerſal jealouſy; "after many deaths, and many diſperſions, two or three of us," ſays he, "may ſtill be brought together, not to plot, but to divert ourſelves, and the world too, if it pleaſes;" and they can live together, and "ſhew what friends wits may be, in ſpite of all the fools in the world." All this while it was likely that the clerks did not know his

hand: he certainly had no more enemies than a public character like his inevitably excites, and with what degree of friendſhip the wits might live, very few were ſo much fools as ever to enquire.

Some part of this pretended diſcontent he learned from Swift, and expreſſes it, I think, moſt frequently in his correſpondence with him. Swift's reſentment was unreaſonable, but it was ſincere; Pope's was the mere mimicry of his friend, a fictitious part which he began to play before it became him. When he was only twenty-five years old, he related, that "a glut of ſtudy and retirement had thrown him on the world," and that there was danger leſt "a glut of the world ſhould throw him back upon ſtudy and retirement." To this Swift anſwered with great propriety, that Pope had not yet either acted or ſuffered enough in the world to have become weary of it. And, indeed, it muſt be ſome very powerful reaſon that can drive back to ſolitude him who has once enjoyed the pleaſures of ſociety.

In the Letters both of Swift and Pope there appears ſuch narrowneſs of mind, as makes them inſenſible of any excellence that has not ſome affinity with their own, and confines their eſteem and approbation to ſo ſmall a number, that whoever ſhould from his opinion of the age from their repreſentation, would ſuppoſe them to have lived amidſt ignorance and barbarity, unable to find among their contemporaries either virtue or intelligence, and perſecuted by thoſe that could not underſtand them.

When Pope murmurs at the world, when he profeſſes contempt of fame, when he ſpeaks of riches and poverty, of ſucceſs and diſappointment, with negligent indifference, he certainly does not expreſs his habitual and ſettled ſentiments, but either wilfully diſguiſes his own character, or, what is more likely, inveſts himſelf with temporary qualities, and ſallies out in the colours of the preſent moment. His hopes and fears, his joys and ſorrows, acted ſtrongly upon his mind; and if he differed from others, it was not by careleſſneſs; he was irritable and reſentful; his malignity to Philips, whom he had firſt made ridiculous, and then hated for being angry, continued too long. Of his vain deſire to make Bentley contemptible, I never heard any adequate reaſon. He was ſometimes wanton in his attacks; and, before Chandos, Lady Wortley, and Hill, was mean in his retreat.

The virtues which ſeem to have had moſt of his affection were liberality and fidelity of friendſhip, in which it does not appear that he was other than he diſcribes himſelf. His fortune did not ſuffer his charity to be ſplendid and conſpicuous; but he aſſiſted Dodſley with a hundred pounds, that he might open a ſhop; and of the ſubſcription of forty pounds a year that he raiſed for Savage, twenty were paid by himſelf. He was accuſed of loving money, but his love was eagerneſs to gain, not ſolicitude to keep it.

In the duties of friendſhip he was zealous and conſtant: his early maturity of mind commonly united him with men older than himſelf, and therefore, without attaining any conſiderable length of life, he ſaw many companions of his youth ſink into the grave; but it does not appear that he loſt a ſingle friend by coldneſs or by injury; thoſe who loved him once, continued their kindneſs. His ungrateful mention of Allen in his will, was the effect of his adherence to one whom he had known much longer, and whom he naturally loved with greater fondneſs. His violation of the truſt repoſed in him by Bolingbroke could have no motive inconſiſtent with the warmeſt affection; he either thought the action ſo near to indifferent that he forgot it, or ſo laudable that he expected his friend to approve it.

It was reported, with ſuch confidence as almoſt to enforce belief, that in the papers intruſted to his executors was found a defamatory Life of Swift, which he had prepared as an inſtrument of vengeance to be uſed, if any provocation ſhould be ever given. About this I enquired of the Earl of Marchmont, who aſſured me that no ſuch piece was among his remains.

The religion in which he lived and died was that of the Church of Rome, to which in his correſpondence with Racine he profeſſes himſelf a ſincere adherent. That he was not ſcrupulouſly pious in ſome part of his life, is known by many idle and indecent applications of ſentences taken from the Scriptures; a mode of merriment which a good man dreads for its profaneneſs, and a witty man diſdains for its eaſineſs and vulgarity. But to whatever levities he has been betrayed, it does not appear that his principles were ever corrupted, or that he ever loſt his belief of Revelation. The poſitions which he tranſmitted from Bolingbroke he ſeems not to have underſtood, and was pleaſed with an interpretation that made them orthodox.

A man of ſuch exalted ſuperiority, and ſo little moderation, would naturally have all his delinquences obſerved and aggravated: thoſe who could not deny that he was excellent, would rejoice to find that he was not perfect.

Perhaps it may be imputed to the unwillingneſs with which the ſame man is allowed to poſſeſs many advantages, that his learning has been depreciated. He certainly was in his early life a man of great literary curioſity; and when he wrote his *Eſſay on Criticiſm* had, for his age, a very wide acquaintance with books. When he entered into the living world, it ſeems to have happened to him as to many others, that he was leſs attentive to dead maſters; he ſtudied in the academy of Paracelſus, and made the univerſe his favourite volume. He gathered his notions freſh from reality, not from the copies of authors, but the originals of Nature. Yet there is no reaſon to believe that literature ever loſt his eſteem; he always profeſſed to love reading; and Dobſon, who ſpent ſome time at his houſe tranſlating his *Eſſay on Man*, when I aſked him what learning he found him to poſſeſs, anſwered, *More than I expected.* His frequent references to hiſtory, his alluſions to various kinds of knowledge, and his images ſelected from art and nature, with his obſervations on the operations of the mind and the modes of life, ſhew an intelligence perpetually on the wing, excurſive, vigorous, and diligent, eager to purſue knowledge, and attentive to retain it.

From this curioſity aroſe the deſire of travelling, to which he alludes in his verſes to Jarves, and which, though he never found an opportunity to gratify it, did not leave him till his life declined.

Of his intellectual character, the conſtituent and fundamental principle was Good Senſe, a prompt and intuitive perception of conſonance and propriety. He ſaw immediately, of his own conceptions, what was to be choſen, and what to be rejected; and, in the works of others, what was to be ſhunned, and what was to be copied.

But good ſenſe alone is a ſedate and quieſcent quality, which manages its poſſeſſions well, but does not increaſe them; it collects few materials for its own operations, and preſerves ſafety, but never gains ſupremacy. Pope had likewiſe genius; a mind active, ambitious, and adventurous, always inveſtigating, always aſpiring; in its wideſt ſearches ſtill longing to go forward, in its higheſt flights

ſtill wiſhing to be higher; always imagining ſomething greater than it knows, always endeavouring more than it can do.

To aſſiſt theſe powers, he is ſaid to have had great ſtrength and exactneſs of memory. That which he had heard or read was not eaſily loſt; and he had before him not only what his own meditation ſuggeſted, but what he had found in other writers, that might be accommodated to his preſent purpoſe.

Theſe benefits of nature he improved by inceſſant and unwearied diligence; he had recourſe to every ſource of intelligence, and loſt no opportunity of information; he conſulted the living as well as the dead; he read his compoſitions to his friends, and was never content with mediocrity when excellence could be attained. He conſidered poetry as the buſineſs of his life, and however he might ſeem to lament his occupation, he followed it with conſtancy; to make verſes was his firſt labour, and to mend them was his laſt.

From his attention to poetry he was never diverted. If converſation offered any thing that could be improved, he committed it to paper; if a thought, or perhaps an expreſſion more happy than was common, roſe to his mind, he was careful to write it; an independent diſtich was preſerved for an opportunity of inſertion, and ſome little fragments have been found containing lines, or parts of lines, to be wrought upon at ſome other time.

He was one of thoſe few whoſe labour is their pleaſure: he was never elevated to negligence, nor wearied to impatience; he never paſſed a vault unamended by indifference, not quitted it by deſpair. He laboured his works firſt to gain reputation, and afterwards to keep it.

Of compoſitions there are different methods. Some employ at once memory and invention, and, with little intermediate uſe of the pen, form and poliſh large maſſes by continued meditation, and write their productions only when, in their own opinion, they have completed them. It is related of Virgil, that his cuſtom was to pour out a great number of verſes in the morning, and paſs the day in retrenching exuberances and correcting inaccuracies. The method of Pope, as may be collected from his tranſlation, was to write his firſt thoughts in his firſt words, and gradually to amplify, decorate, rectify, and refine them.

With such faculties, and such dispositions, he excelled every other writer in *poetical prudence;* he wrote in such a manner as might expose him to few hazards. He used almost always the same fabric of verse; and indeed, by those few essays which he made of any other, he did not enlarge his reputation. Of this uniformity the certain consequence was readiness and dexterity. By perpetual practice, language had in his mind a systematical arrangement; having always the same use for words, he had words so selected and combined as to be ready at his call. This increase of facility he confessed himself to have perceived in the progress of his translation.

But what was yet of more importance, his effusions were always voluntary, and his subjects chosen by himself. His independence secured him from drudging at a task, and labouring upon a barren topic: he never exchanged praise for money, nor opened a shop of condolence or congratulation. His poems, therefore, were scarce ever temporary. He suffered coronations and royal marriages to pass without a song, and derived no opportunities from recent events, nor any popularity from the accidental disposition of his readers. He was never reduced to the necessity of soliciting the sun to shine upon a birth-day, of calling the Graces and Virtues to a wedding, or of saying what multitudes have said before him. When he could produce nothing now, he was at liberty to be silent.

His publications were for the same reason never hasty. He is said to have sent nothing to the press till it had lain two years under his inspection: it is at least certain, that he ventured nothing without nice examination. He suffered the tumult of imagination to subside, and the novelties of invention to grow familiar. He knew that the mind is always enamoured of its own productions, and did not trust his first fondness. He consulted his friends, and listened with great willingness to criticism; and, what was of more importance, he consulted himself, and let nothing pass against his own judgment.

He professed to have learned his poetry from Dryden, whom, whenever an opportunity was presented, he praised through his whole life with unvaried liberality; and perhaps his character may receive some illustration, if he be compared with his master.

Integrity of understanding and nicety of discernment were not allotted in a less proportion to Dryden than to

Pope. The rectitude of Dryden's mind was ſufficiently ſhewn by the diſmiſſion of his poetical prejudices, and the rejection of unnatural thoughts and rugged numbers. But Dryden never deſired to apply all the judgment that he had. He wrote, and profeſſed to write, merely for the people; and when he pleaſed others, he contented himſelf. He ſpent no time in ſtruggles to rouſe latent powers he never attempted to make that better which was already good, nor often to mend what he muſt have known to be faulty. He wrote, as he tells us, with very little conſideration; when occaſion or neceſſity called upon him, he poured out what the preſent moment happened to ſupply, and, when once it had paſſed the preſs, ejected it from his mind; for when he had no pecuniary intereſt, he had no further ſolicitude.

Pope was not content to ſatisfy; he deſired to excel, and therefore always endeavoured to do his beſt: he did not court the candour, but dared the judgment of his reader, and, expecting no indulgence from others, he ſhewed none to himſelf. He examined lines and words with minute and punctilious obſervation, and retouched every part with indefatigable diligence, till he had left nothing to be forgiven.

For this reaſon he kept his pieces very long in his hands, while he conſidered and re-conſidered them. The only poems which can be ſuppoſed to have been written with ſuch regard to the times as might haſten their publication, were the two ſatires of *Thirty-eight*; of which Dodſley told me, that they were brought to him by the author, that they might be fairly copied. "Almoſt every line," he ſaid, "was then written twice over; I gave him a clean tranſcript, which he ſent ſome time afterwards to me for the preſs, with almoſt every line written twice over a ſecond time."

His declaration, that his care for his works ceaſed at their publication, was not ſtrictly true. His parental attention never abandoned them; what he found amiſs in the firſt edition, he ſilently corrected in thoſe that followed. He appears to have reviſed the *Iliad*, and freed it from ſome of its imperfections; and the *Eſſay on Criticism* received many improvements after its firſt appearance. It will ſeldom be found that he altered without adding clearneſs, elegance, or vigour.

Pope had perhaps the judgment of Dryden; but Dryden certainly wanted the diligence of Pope.

In acquired knowledge, the ſuperiority muſt be allowed to Dryden, whoſe education was more ſcholaſtic and who before he became an author had been allowed more time for ſtudy, with better means of information. His mind has a larger range, and he collects his images and illuſtrations from a more extenſive circumference of ſcience. Dryden knew more of man in his general nature, and Pope in his local manners. The notions of Dryden were formed by comprehenſive ſpeculation, and thoſe of Pope by minute attention. There is more dignity in the knowledge of Dryden, and more certainty in that of Pope.

Poetry was not the ſole praiſe of either; for both excelled likewiſe in proſe; but Pope did not borrow his proſe from his predeceſſor. The ſtyle of Dryden is capricious and varied, that of Pope is cautious and uniform; Dryden obeys the motions of his own mind; Pope conſtrains his mind to his own rules of compoſition. Dryden is ſometimes vehement and rapid; Pope is always ſmooth, uniform, and gentle. Dryden's page is a natural field, raiſing into inequalities, and diverſified by the varied exuberance of abundant vegetation; Pope's is a velvet lawn, ſhaven by the ſcythe, and levelled by the roller.

Of genius, that power which conſtitutes a poet; that quality without which judgment is cold and knowledge is inert; that energy which collects, combines, amplifies, and animates; the ſuperiority muſt, with ſome heſitation, be allowed to Dryden. It is not to be inferred that of this poetical vigour Pope had only a little, becauſe Dryden had more; for every other writer ſince Milton muſt give place to Pope; and even of Dryden it muſt be ſaid, that if he has brighter paragraphs, he has not better poems. Dryden's performances were always haſty, either excited by ſome external occaſion, or extorted by domeſtic neceſſity; he compoſed without conſideration, and publiſhed without correction. What his mind could ſupply at call, or gather in one excurſion, was all that he ſought, and all that he gave. The dilatory caution of Pope enabled him to condenſe his ſentiments, to multiply his images, and to accumulate all that ſtudy might produce, or chance might ſupply. If the flights of Dryden therefore are higher, Pope continues longer on the wing. If of Dryden's fire the blaze is brighter, of Pope's the heat is more regular and conſtant. Dryden often ſurpaſſes expectation, and

Pope never falls below it. Dryden is read with frequent aſtoniſhment, and Pope with perpetual delight.

This parallel will, I hope, when it is well conſidered, be found juſt; and if the reader ſhould ſuſpect me, as I ſuſpect myſelf, of ſome partial fondneſs for the memory of Dryden, let him not too haſtily condemn me; for meditation and enquiry may, perhaps, ſhew him the reaſonableneſs of my determination.

The Works of POPE are now to be diſtinctly examined, not ſo much with attention to ſlight faults or petty beauties, as to the general character and effect of each performance.

It ſeems natural for a young poet to initiate himſelf by Paſtorals, which, not profeſſing to imitate real life, require no experience, and exhibiting only the ſimple operation of unmingled paſſions, admit no ſubtle reaſoning or deep enquiry. Pope's Paſtorals are not however compoſed with cloſe thought; they have reference to the times of the day, the ſeaſons of the year, and the periods of human life. The laſt, that which turns the attention upon age and death, was the author's favourite. To tell of diſappointment and miſery, to thicken the darkneſs of futurity, and perplex the labyrinth of uncertainty, has been always a delicious employment of the poets. His preference was probably juſt. I wiſh, however, that his fondneſs had not overlooked a line in which the *Zephyrs* are made *to lament in ſilence.*

To charge theſe Paſtorals with want of invention, is to require what never was intended. The imitations are ſo ambitiouſly frequent, that the writer evidently means rather to ſhew his literature than his wit. It is ſurely ſufficient for an author of ſixteen, not only to be able to copy the poems of antiquity with judicious ſelection, but to have obtained ſufficient power of language, and ſkill in metre, to exhibit a ſeries of verſification, which had in Engliſh poetry no precedent, nor has ſince had an imitation.

The deſign of *Windſor Forest* is evidently derived from *Cooper's Hill*, with ſome attention to Waller's poem on *The Park;* but Pope cannot be denied to excel his maſters in variety and elegance, and the art of interchanging de-

ſcription, narrative, and morality. The objection made by Dennis is the want of plan, of a regular ſubordination of parts terminating in the principle and original deſign. There is this want in moſt deſcriptive poems, becauſe as the ſcenes, which they muſt exhibit ſucceſſively, are all ſubſiſting at the ſame time, the order in which they are ſhewn muſt by neceſſity be arbitrary, and more is not to be expected from the laſt part than the firſt. The attention, therefore, which cannot be detained by ſuſpenſe, muſt be excited by diverſity, ſuch as his poem offers to its reader.

But the deſire of diverſity may be too much indulged; the parts of *Windsor Forest* which deſerves leaſt praiſe, are thoſe which were added to enliven the ſtillneſs of the ſcene, the appearance of Father Thames, and the transformation of *Lodona*. Addiſon had in his *Campaign* derided the *Rivers* that *rise from their oozy beds* to tell ſtories of heroes, and it is therefore ſtrange that Pope ſhould adopt a fiction not only unnatural but lately cenſured. The ſtory of *Lodona* is told with ſweetneſs; but a new metamorphoſis is a ready and puerile expedient; nothing is eaſier than to tell how a flower was once a blooming virgin, or a rock an obdurate tyrant.

The *Temple of Fame* has, as Steele warmly declared, *a thousand beauties*. Every part is ſplendid; there is great luxuriance of ornaments; the original viſion of Chaucer was never denied to be much improved; the allegory is very ſkilfully continued, the imagery is properly ſelected, and learnedly diſplayed: yet, with all this comprehenſion of excellence, as its ſcene is laid in remote ages, and its ſentiments, if the concluding paragraph be excepted, have little relation to general manners or common life, it never obtained much notice, but is turned ſilently over, and ſeldom quoted or mentioned with either praiſe or blame.

That the *Messiah* excells the *Pollio* is no great praiſe, if it be conſidered from what original the improvements are derived.

The *Verses on the unfortunate Lady* have drawn much attention by the illaudable ſingularity of treating ſuicide with reſpect; and they muſt be allowed to be written in ſome parts with vigorous animation, and in others with gentle tenderneſs; nor has Pope produced any poem in which the ſenſe predominates more over the diction. But the tale is not ſkilfully told; it is not eaſy to diſcover the

character of either the Lady or her Guardian. Hiſtory relates that ſhe was about to diſparage herſelf by a marriage with an inferior; Pope praiſes her for the dignity of ambition, and yet condemns the uncle to deteſtation for his pride; the ambitious love of a niece may be oppoſed by the intereſt, malice, or envy of an uncle, bet never by his pride. On ſuch an occaſion a poet may be allowed to be obſcure, but inconſiſtancy never can be right.

The *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* was undertaken at the deſire of Steele: in this the author is generally confeſſed to have miſcarried, yet he has miſcarried only as compared with Dryden; for he has far outgone other competitors. Dryden's plan is better choſen; hiſtory will always take ſtronger hold of the attention than fable: the paſſions excited by Dryden are the pleaſures and pains of real life, the ſcene of Pope is laid in imaginary exiſtence; Pope is read with calm acquieſcence, Dryden with turbulent delight; Pope hangs upon the ear, and Dryden finds the paſſes of the mind.

Both the odes want the eſſential conſtituent of metrical compoſitions, the ſtated recurrence of ſettled numbers. It may be alledged, that Pindar is ſaid by Horace to have written *numeris lege ſolutis*: but as no ſuch lax performances have been tranſmitted to us, the meaning of that expreſſion cannot be fixed; and perhaps the like return might properly be made to a modern Pindariſt, as Mr. Cobb received from Bentley, who, when he found his criticiſms upon a Greek Exerciſe, which Cobb had preſented, refuted one after another by Pindar's authority, cried out at laſt, *Pindar was a bold fellow, but thou art an impudent one.*

If Pope's ode be particularly inſpected, it will be found that the firſt ſtanza conſiſts of ſounds well choſen indeed, but only ſounds.

The ſecond conſiſts of hyperbolical common-places, eaſily to be found, and perhaps without much difficulty to be as well expreſſed.

In the third, however, there are numbers, images, harmony, and vigour, not unworthy the antagoniſtof Drydon. Had all been like this—but every part cannot be the beſt.

The next ſtanzas place and detain us in the dark and diſmal regions of mythology, where neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor ſorrow can be found: the poet however faithfully attends us; we have all that can be performed by

elegance of diction, or sweetness of versification; but what can form avail without better matter.

The last stanza recurs again to common places. The conclusion is too evidently modelled by that of Dryden; and it may be remarked that both end with the same fault, the comparison of each is literal on one side, and metaphorical on the other.

Poets do not always express their own thoughts; Pope, with all his labour in praise of Music, was ignorant of its principles, and insensible of its effects.

One of his greatest though of his earliest works is the *Essay on Criticism*, which if he had written nothing else, would have placed him among the first poets, as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embellish or dignify didactic composition, selection of matter, novelty of arrangement, justness of precept, splendour of illustration, and propriety of digression. I know not whether it be pleasing to consider that he produced this piece at twenty, and never afterwards excelled it: he that delights himself with observing that such powers may be so soon attained, cannot but grieve to think that life was ever after at a stand.

To mention the particular beauties of the Essay would be unprofitably tedious; but I cannot forbear to observe that the comparison of a student's progress in the sciences with the journey of a traveller in the Alps, is perhaps the best that English poetry can shew. A simile, to be perfect must both illustrate and ennoble the subject; must shew it to the understanding in a clearer view, and display it to the fancy with greater dignity; but either of these qualities may be sufficient to recommend it. In didactic poetry, of which the great purpose is instruction, a simile may be praised with illustrates, though it does not ennoble; in heroics, that may be admitted which ennobles, though it does not illustrate. That it may be complete, it is required to exhibit, independently of its references, a pleasing image; for a simile is said to be a short episode. To this antiquity was so attentive, that circumstances were sometimes added, which having no paralels, served only to fill the imagination, and produced what Perrault ludicrously called *comparisons with a long tail.* In their similies the greatest writers have sometimes failed; the ship-race, compared with the chariot-race, is neither illustrated nor aggrandised; land and water make all the difference; when Apollo, run-

ning after Daphne, is likened unto a greyhound chaſing a hare, there is nothing gained; the ideas of purſuit and flight are too plain to be made plainer, and a god and the daughter of a god are not repreſented much to their advantage, by a hair and dog. The ſimile of the Alps has no uſeleſs parts yet affords a ſtriking picture by itſelf; it makes the foregoing poſition better underſtood, and ennables it to take faſter hold on the attention; it aſſiſts the apprehenſion, and elevates the fancy.

Let me likewiſe dwell a little on the celebrated paragraph, in which it is directed that *the ſound ſhould ſeem an echo to the ſenſe*; a precept which Pope is allowed to have obſerved beyond any other Engliſh poet.

This notion of repreſentative metre, and the deſire of diſcovering frequent adaptions of the ſound to the ſenſe, have produced, in my opinion, many wild conceits and imaginary beauties. All that can furniſh this repreſentation are the ſounds of the words conſidered ſingly, and the time in which they are pronounced. Every language has ſome words framed to exhibit the noiſes which they expreſs, as *thump*, *rattle*, *growl*, *hiss*. Theſe, however, are but few, and the poet cannot make them more, nor can they be of any uſe but when ſound is to be mentioned. The time of pronunciation was in the dactylic meaſures of the learned languages capable of conſiderable variety; but that variety could be accommodated only to motion or duration and different degrees of motion were perhaps expreſſed by verſes rapid or ſlow, without much attention of the writer, when the image had full poſſeſſion of his fancy; but our language having little flexibility, our verſes can differ very little in their cadence. The fancied reſemblances, I fear, ariſe ſometimes merely from the ambiguity of words; there is ſuppoſed to be ſome relation between a *ſoft* line and a *ſoft* couch, or between *hard* ſyllables and *hard* fortune.

Motion, however, may be in ſome ſort exemplified; and it may be ſuſpected that even in ſuch reſemblances the mind often governs the ear, and the ſounds are eſtimated by their meaning. One of the moſt ſucceſsful attempts has been to deſcribe the labour of Siſyphus:

> With many a weary ſtep, and many a groan,
> Up a high hill he heaves a huge round ſtone;
> The huge round ſtone, reſulting with a bound,
> Thunders impetuous down, and ſmoaks along the ground.

Who does not perceive the ſtone to move ſlowly upward, and roll violently back? But ſet the ſame numbers to another ſenſe;

> While many a merry tale, and many a ſong,
> Chear'd the rough road, we wiſh'd the rough road along.
> The rough road then, returning in a round,
> Mock'd our impatient ſteps, for all was fairy ground.

We have now ſurely loſt much of the delay, and much of the rapidity.

But to ſhew how little the greateſt maſter of numbers can fix the principles of repreſentative harmony, it will be ſufficient to remark that the poet who tells us, that

> When Ajax ſtrives—the words move ſlow.
> Not ſo when ſwift Camilla ſcours the plain,
> Flies o'er th'unbending corn, and ſkims along the main;

when he had enjoyed for about thirty years the praiſe of Camilla's lightneſs of foot, tried another experiment upon *ſound* and *time*, and produced this memorable triplet;

> Waller was ſmooth; but Dryden taught to join
> The varying verſe, the full reſounding line,
> The long majeſtic march, and energy divine.

Here are the ſwiftneſs of the rapid race, and the march of ſlow-paced majeſty, exhibited by the ſame poet in the ſame ſequence of ſyllables, except that the exact proſodiſt will find the line of *ſwiftness* by one time longer than that of *tardiness*.

Beauties of this kind are commonly fancied; and when real, are technical and nugatory, not to be rejected, and not to be ſolicited.

To the praiſes which have been accumulated on *The Rape of the Lock* by readers of every claſs, from the critic to the waiting-maid, it is difficult to make any addition. Of that which is univerſally allowed to be the moſt attractive of all ludicrous compoſitions, let it rather be now enquired from what ſources the power of pleaſing is derived.

Dr. Warburton, who excelled in critical perſpicacity, has remarked, that the preternatural agents are very happily adapted to the purpoſes of the poem. The heathen deities can no longer gain attention: we ſhould have turned away from a conteſt between Venus and Diana. The employ-

ment of allegorical perſons always excites conviction of its own abſurdity ; they may produce effects, but cannot conduct actions ; when the phantom is put in motion, it diſſolves ; thus *Discord* may raiſe a mutiny, but *Discord* cannot conduct a march, nor beſiege a town. Pope brought into view a new race of Beings, with powers and paſſions proportionate to their operation. The ſylphs and gnomes act at the toilet and the tea-table, what more terrific and more powerful phantoms perform on the ſtormy ocean, or the field of battle, they give their proper help and do their proper miſchief.

Pope is ſaid, by an objector, not to have been the inventor of this pretty nation ; a charge which might with more juſtice have been brought againſt the author of the *Iliad*, who doubtleſs adopted the religious ſyſtem of his country ; for what is there but the names of his agents which Pope has not invented ? Has he not, at leaſt, given them their firſt poetical exiſtence ? Has he not aſſigned them characters and operations never heard of before ? If this is not ſufficient to denominate his works original, nothing original ever can be written.

In this work are exhibited, in a very high degree, the two moſt engaging powers of an author. New things are made familiar, and familiar things are made new. A race of aerial people, never heard of before, is preſented to us in a manner ſo clear and eaſy, that the reader ſeeks for no further information, but immediately mingles with his new acqaintance, adopts their intereſts, and attends their purſuits, loves a ſylph, and deteſts a gnome.

That familiar things are made new, every paragraph will prove. The ſubject of the poem is an event below the common incidents of common life ; nothing real is introduced that is not ſeen ſo often as to be no longer regarded, yet the whole detail of a female-day is here brought before us inveſted with ſo much art of decoration, that, though nothing is diſguiſed, every thing is ſtriking, and we feel all the appetite of curioſity for that from which we have a thouſand times turned faſtidiouſly away.

The purpoſe of the Poet is, as he tells us, to laugh at *the little unguarded follies of the female ſex*. It is therefore without juſtice that Dennis charges the *Rape of the Lock* with the want of a moral, and for that reaſon ſets it below the *Lutrin*, which expoſes the pride and diſcord of the clergy. Perhaps neither Pope nor Boileau has made the world

much better than when they found it; but if they had both succeeded, it were easy to tell who would have deserved most from public gratitude. The freaks, and humours, and spleen, and vanity of women, as they embroil families in discord, and fill houses with disquiet, do more to obstruct the happiness of life in a year, than the ambition of the clergy in many centuries. It has been well observed that the misery of man proceeds not from any single crush of overwhelming evil, but from small vexations continually repeated.

It is remarked by Dennis likewise, that the machinery is superfluous: that, by all the bustle of preternatural operation, the main event is neither hastened nor retarded. To this charge an efficacious answer is not easily made. The sylphs cannot be said to help or to oppose, and it must be allowed to imply some want of art, that their power has not been sufficiently intermingled with the action. Other parts may likewise be charged with want of connection; the game at *ombre* might be spared, but if the Lady had lost her hair while she was intent upon her cards, it might have been inferred that those who are too fond of play will be in danger of neglecting more important interests. Those perhaps are faults; but what are such faults to so much excellence?

The Epistle of *Eloise to Abelard* is one of the most happy productions of human wit: the subject is so judiciously chosen, that it would be difficult, in turning over the annals of the world, to find another which so many circumstances concur to recommend. We regularly interest ourselves most in the fortune of those who most deserve our notice. Abelard and Eloise were conspicuous in their days for eminence of merit. The heart naturally loves truth. The adventures and misfortunes of this illustrious pair are known from undisputed history. Their fate does not leave the mind in hopeless dejection; for they both found quiet and consolation in retirement and piety. So new and so affecting is their story, that it supersedes invention, and imagination ranges at full liberty without struggling into scenes of fable.

The story, thus skilfully adopted, has been diligently improved. Pope has left nothing behind him, which seems more the effect of studious perseverance and laborious revisal. Here is particularly observable the *curiosa felicitas*,

a fruitful ſoil, and careful cultivation. Here is no crudeneſs of ſenſe, nor aſperity of language.

The ſources from which ſentiments, which have ſo much vigour and efficacy, have been drawn, are ſhewn to be the myſtic writers by the learned author of the *Eſſay on the Life and the Writings of Pope;* a book which teaches how the brow of Criticiſm may be ſmoothed, and how ſhe may be enabled, with all her ſeverity, to attract and to delight.

The train of my diſquiſition has now conducted me to that poetical wonder, the tranſlation of the *Iliad;* a performance which no age or nation can pretend to equal. To the Greeks, tranſlation was almoſt unknown; it was totally unknown to the inhabitants of Greece. They had no recourſe to the Barbarians for poetical beauties, but ſought for every thing in Homer, where, indeed, there is but little which they might not find.

The Italians have been very diligent tranſlators; but I can hear of no verſion, unleſs perhaps Anguillara's Ovid may be excepted, which is read with eagerneſs. The *Iliad* of Salvini every reader may diſcover to be punctiliouſly exact; but it ſeems to be the work of a linguiſt ſkilfully pedantic, and his countrymen, the proper judges of its power to pleaſe, reject it with diſguſt.

Their predeceſſors the Romans have left ſome ſpecimens of tranſlation behind them, and that employment muſt have had ſome credit in which Tully and Germanicus engaged; but unleſs we ſuppoſe, what is perhaps true, that the plays of Terence were verſions of Menander, nothing tranſlated ſeems ever to have riſen to high reputation. The French, in the meridian hour of their learning, were very laudibly induſtrious to enrich their own language with the wiſdom of the ancients; but found themſelves reduced, by whatever neceſſity, to turn the Greek and Roman poetry into proſe. Whoever could read an author, could tranſlate him. From ſuch rivals little can be feared.

The chief help of Pope in this arduous undertaking was drawn from the verſions of Dryden. Virgil had borrowed much of his imagery from Homer, and part of the debt was now paid by his tranſlator. Pope ſearched the pages of Dryden for happy combinations of heroic diction; but it will not be denied that he added much to what he found. He cultivated our language with ſo much diligence and art, that he has left in his *Homer* a treaſure of poetical elegances to poſterity. His verſion may be ſaid to have tuned the

Engliſh tongue; for ſince its appearance no writer, however deficient in other powers has wanted melody. Such a ſeries of lines ſo elaborately corrected, and ſo ſweetly modulated, took poſſeſſion of the public ear; the vulgar was enamoured of the poem, and the learned wondered at the tranſlation.

But in the moſt general applauſe diſcordant voices will always be heard. It has been objected by ſome, who wiſh to be numbered among the ſons of learning, that Pope's verſion of Homer is not Homerical; that it exhibits no reſemblance of the original and characteriſtic manner of the Father of Poetry, as it wants his awful ſimplicity, his artleſs grandeur, his unaffected majeſty. This cannot be totally denied; but it muſt be remembered that *necessitas quod cogit defendit;* that may be lawfully done which cannot be forborn. Time and place will always enforce regard. In eſtimating this tranſlation, conſideration muſt be had of the nature of our language, the form of our metre, and, above all, of the change which two thouſand years have made in the modes of life and the habits of thought. Virgil wrote in a language of the ſame general fabric with that of Homer, in verſes of the ſame meaſure, and in any age nearer to Homer's time by eighteen hundred years; yet he found, even then, the ſtate of the world ſo much altered, and the demand for elegance ſo much increaſed, that mere nature would be endured no longer; and perhaps, in the multitude of borrowed paſſages, very few can be ſhewn which he has not embelliſhed.

There is a time when nations emerging from barbarity, and falling into regular ſubordination, gain leiſure to grow wiſe, and feel the ſhame of ignorance and the craving pain of unſatisfied curioſity. To this hunger of the mind plain ſenſe is grateful; that which fills the void removes uneaſineſs, and to be free from pain for a while is pleaſure; but repletion generates faſtidiouſneſs; a ſaturated intellect ſoon becomes luxurious, and knowledge finds no willing reception till it is recommended by artificial diction. Thus it will be found, in the progreſs of learning, that in all nations the firſt writers are ſimple, and that every age improves in elegance. One refinement always makes way for another, and what was expedient to Virgil was neceſſary to Pope.

I ſuppoſe many readeas of the Engliſh *Iliad*, when they have been touched with ſome unexpected beauty of the

lighter kind, have tried to enjoy it in the original, where, alas! it was not to be found. Homer doubtleſs owes to his tranſlator many *Ovidian* graces not exactly ſuitable to his character; but to have added can be no great crime, if nothing be taken away. Elegance is ſurely to be deſired, if it be not gained at the expence of dignity. A hero would wiſh to be loved, as well as to be reverenced.

To a thouſand cavils one anſwer is ſufficient; the purpoſe of a writer is to be read, and the criticiſm which would deſtroy the power of pleaſing muſt be blown aſide. Pope wrote for his own age and his own nation: he knew that it was neceſſary to colour the images and point the ſentiments of his author; he therefore made him graceful, but loſt him ſome of his ſublimity.

The copious notes with which the verſion is accompanied, and by which it is recommended to many readers, though they were undoubtedly written to ſwell the volumes, ought not to paſs without praiſe: commentaries which attract the reader by the pleaſure of peruſal have not often appeared; the notes of others are read to clear difficulties, thoſe of Pope to vary entertainment.

It has however been objected, with ſufficient reaſon, that there is in the commentary too much of unſeaſonable levity and affected gaiety; that too many appeals are made to the Ladies, and the eaſe which is ſo carefully preſerved is ſometimes the eaſe of a trifler. Every art has its terms, and every kind of inſtruction its proper ſtyle; the gravity of common critics may be tedious, but is leſs deſpicable than childiſh merriment.

Of the *Odyssey* nothing remains to be obſerved: the ſame general praiſe may be given to both tranſlations, and a particular examination of either would require a large volume. The notes were written by Broome, who endeavoured not unſucceſsfully to imitate his maſter.

Of the *Dunciad* the hint is confeſſedly taken from Dryden's *Mac Flecknoe;* but the plan is ſo enlarged and diverſified as juſtly to claim the praiſes of an original, and affords perhaps the beſt ſpecimen that has yet appeared of perſonal ſatire ludicrouſly pompous.

That the deſign was moral, whatever the author might tell either his readers or himſelf, I am not convinced. The firſt motive was the deſire of revenging the contempt with which Theobald had treated his *Shakspeare*, and regaining the honour which he had loſt, by cruſhing his opponent.

Theobald was not of bulk enough to fill a poem, and therefore it was neceſſary to find other enemies with other names, at whoſe expence he might divert the public.

In this deſign there was petulance and malignity enough; but I cannot think it very criminal. An author places himſelf uncalled before the tribunal of Criticiſm, and ſolicits fame at the hazard of diſgrace. Dulneſs or deformity are not culpable in themſelves, but may be very juſtly reproached when they pretend to the honour of wit or the influence of beauty. If bad writers were to paſs without reprehenſion, what ſhould reſtrain them? *impune diem conſumpſerit ingens Telephus*: and upon bad writers only will cenſure have much effect. The ſatire which brought Theobald and Moore into contempt, dropped impotent from Bentley, like the javelin of Priam.

All truth is valuable, and ſatirical criticiſm may be conſidered as uſeful when it rectifies error and improves judgment; he that refines the public taſte is a public benefactor.

The beauties of this poem are well known; its chief fault is the groſſneſs of its images. Pope and Swift had an unnatural delight in ideas phyſically impure, ſuch as every other tongue utters with unwillingneſs, and of which every ear ſhrinks from the mention.

But even this fault, offenſive as it is, may be forgiven for the excellence of other paſſages; ſuch as the formation and diſſolution of Moore, the account of the Traveller, the misfortune of the Floriſt, and the crowded thoughts and ſtately numbers which dignify the concluding paragraph.

The alterations which have been made in the *Dunciad*, not always for the better, require that it ſhould be publiſhed, as in the laſt collection, with all its variations.

The *Eſſay on Man* was a work of great labour and long conſideration, but certainly not the happieſt of Pope's performances. The ſubject is perhaps not very proper for poetry, and the poet was not ſufficiently maſter of his ſubject; metaphyſical morality was to him a new ſtudy, he was proud of his acquiſitions, and, ſuppoſing himſelf maſter of great ſecrets, was in haſte to teach what he had not learned. Thus he tells us, in the firſt Epiſtle, that from the nature of the Supreme Being may be deduced an order of beings ſuch as mankind, becauſe Infinite Excellence can do only what is beſt. He finds out that theſe be-

ings muſt be *somewhere*, and that *all the queſtion is whether man be in a wrong place*. Surely if, according to the poet's Leibitian reaſoning, we may infer that man ought to be, only becauſe he is, we may allow that his place is the right place, becauſe he has it. Supreme Wiſdom is not leſs infallible in diſpoſing than in creating. But what is meant by *somewhere* and *place*, and *wrong place*, it had been vain to aſk Pope, who probably had never aſked himſelf.

Having exalted himſelf into the chair of wiſdom, he tells us much that every man knows, and much that he does not know himſelf; that we ſee but little, and that the order of the univerſe is beyond our comprehenſion; an opinion not very uncommon; and that there is a chain of ſubordinate beings *from infinite to nothing*, of which himſelf and his readers are equally ignorant. But he gives us one comfort, which, without his help, he ſuppoſes unattainable, in the poſition *that though we are fools, yet God is wiſe*.

This Eſſay affords an egregious inſtance of the predominance of genius, the dazzling ſplendour of imagery, and the ſeductive powers of eloquence. Never were penury of knowledge and vulgarity of ſentiment ſo happily diſguiſed. The reader feels his mind full, though he learns nothing; and when he meets it in its new array, no longer knows the talk of his mother and his nurſe. When theſe wonder-working ſounds ſink into ſenſe, and the doctrine of the Eſſay, diſrobed of its ornaments, is left to the powers of its naked excellence, what ſhall we diſcover? That we are, in compariſon with our Creator, very weak and ignorant; that we do not uphold the chain of exiſtence, and that we could not make one another with more ſkill than we are made. We may learn yet more; that the arts of human life were copied from the inſtinctive operations of other animals; that if the world be made for man, it may be ſaid that man was made for geeſe. To theſe profound principles of natural knowledge are added ſome moral inſtructions equally new; that ſelf-intereſt, well underſtood, will produce ſocial concord; that men are mutual gainers by mutual benefits; that evil is ſometimes balanced by good; that human advantages are unſtable and fallacious, of uncertain duration, and doubtful effect; that our true honour is, not to have a great part, but to act it well:

that virtue only is our own; and that happineſs is always in our power.

Surely a man of no very comprehenſive ſearch may venture to ſay that he has heard all this before; but it was never till now recommended by ſuch a blaze of embelliſhment, or ſuch ſweetneſs of melody. The vigorous contraction of ſome thoughts, the luxuriant amplification of others, the incidental illuſtrations, and ſometimes the dignity, ſometimes the ſoftneſs of the verſes, enchain philoſophy, ſuſpend criticiſm, and oppreſs judgment by overpowering pleaſure.

This is true of many paragraphs; yet if I had undertaken to exemplify Pope's felicity of compoſition before a rigid critic, I ſhould not ſelect the *Eſſay on Man;* for it contains more lines unſucceſsfully laboured, more harſhneſs of diction, more thoughts imperfectly expreſſed, more levity without elegance, and more heavineſs without ſtrength, than will eaſily be found in all his other works.

The *Characters of Men and Women* are the product of diligent ſpeculation upon human life; much labour has been beſtowed upon them, and Pope very ſeldom laboured in vain. That his excellence may be properly eſtimated, I recommend a compariſon of his *Characters of Women* with Boileau's Satire; it will then be ſeen with how much more perſpicuity female nature is inveſtigated, and female excellence ſelected; and he ſurely is no mean writer to whom Boileau ſhall be found inferior. The *Characters of Men*, however, are written with more, if not with deeper, thought, and exhibit many paſſages exquiſitely beautiful. The *Gem and the Flower* will not eaſily be equalled. In the women's part are ſome defects; the character of *Atoſſa* is not ſo neatly finiſhed as that of *Clodio;* and ſome of the female characters may be found perhaps more frequently among men; what is ſaid of *Philomede* was true of *Prior*.

In the Epiſtles to Lord Bathurſt and Lord Burlington, Dr. Warburton has endeavoured to find a train of thought which was never in the writer's head, and to ſupport his hypotheſis, has printed that firſt which was publiſhed laſt. In one, the moſt valuable paſſage is perhaps the Elegy on *Good Senſe*, and the other the *End of the Duke of Buckingham*.

The Epiſtle to Arbuthnot, now arbitrarily called the *Prologue to the Satires*, is a performance conſiſting, as it ſeems, of many fragments wrought into one deſign, which

by this union of ſcattered beauties contains more ſtriking paragraphs than could probably have been brought together into an occaſional work. As there is no ſtronger motive to exertion than ſelf-defence, no part has more elegance, ſpirit, or dignity, than the poet's vindication of his own character. The meaneſt paſſage is the ſatire upon *Sporus*.

Of the two poems which derived their names from the year, and which are called the *Epilogue to the Satires*, it was very juſtly remarked by Savage, that the ſecond was in the whole more ſtrongly conceived, and more equally ſupported; but that it had no ſingle paſſages equal to the contention in the firſt for the dignity of Vice, and the celebration of the triumph of Corruption.

The Imitations of Horace ſeem to have been written as relaxation of his genius. This employment became his favourite by its facility; the plan was ready to his hand, and nothing was required but to accommodate as he could the ſentiments of an old author to recent facts or familiar images; but what is eaſy is ſeldom excellent; ſuch imitations cannot give pleaſure to common readers; the man of learning may be ſometimes ſurpriſed and delighted by an unexpected parallel; but the compariſon requires knowledge of the original, which will likewiſe often detect ſtrained applications. Between Roman images and Engliſh manners there will be an irreconcileable diſſimilitude, and the work will be generally uncouth and party-coloured; neither original nor tranſlated, neither ancient nor modern.

Pope had, in proportions very nicely adjuſted to each other, all the qualities that conſtitute genius. He had *Invention*, by which new trains of events are formed, and new ſcenes of imagery diſplayed, as in the *Rape of the Lock;* and by which extrinſic and adventitious embelliſhments and illuſtrations are connected with a known ſubject, as in the *Eſſay on Criticism*. He had *Imagination*, which ſtrongly impreſſes on the writer's mind, and enables him to convey to the reader, the various forms of nature, incidents of life, and energies of paſſion, as in his *Eloiſa*, *Windſor Forest*, and the *Ethic Epiſtles*. He had *Judgment* which ſelects from life or nature what the preſent purpoſe requires, and, by ſeparating the eſſence of things from its concomitants, often makes the repreſentation more powerful than the reality: and he had colours of language always before him, ready to decorate his matter with every

grace of elegant expreſſion, as when he accommodates his diction to the wonderful multiplicity of Homer's ſentiments and deſcriptions.

Poetical expreſſion includes ſound as well as meaning; *Muſic*, ſays Dryden, *is inarticulate Poetry;* among the excellencies of Pope, therefore, muſt be mentioned the melody of his metre. By peruſing the works of Dryden, he diſcovered the moſt perfect fabric of Engliſh verſe, and habituated himſelf to that only which he found the beſt; in conſequence of which reſtraint, his poetry has been cenſured as too uniformly muſical, and as glutting the ear with unvaried ſweetneſs. I ſuſpect this objection to be the cant of thoſe who judge by principles rather than perception: and who would even themſelves have leſs pleaſure in his works, if he had tried to relieve attention by ſtudied diſcords, or affected to break his lines and vary his pauſes.

But though he was thus careful of his verſification, he did not oppreſs his powers with ſuperfluous rigour. He ſeems to have thought with Boileau, that the practice of writing might be refined till the difficulty ſhould overbalance the advantage. The conſtruction of his language is not always ſtrictly grammatical; with thoſe rhymes which preſcription had conjoined he contented himſelf, without regard to Swift's remonſtrances, though there was no ſtriking conſonance; nor was he very careful to vary his terminations, or to refuſe admiſſion at a ſmall diſtance to the ſame rhymes.

To Swift's edict for the excluſion of Alexandrines and Triplets he paid little regard; he admitted them, but, in the opinion of Fenton, too rarely; he uſes them more liberally in his tranſlation than his poems.

He has a few double rhymes; and always, I think, unſucceſsfully, except once in the *Rape of the Lock*.

Expletives he very early ejected from his verſes; but he now and then admits an epithet rather commodious than important. Each of the ſix firſt lines of the *Iliad* might loſe two ſyllables with very little diminution of the meaning; and ſometimes, after all his art and labour, one verſe ſeems to be made for the ſake of another. In his latter productions the diction is ſometimes vitiated by French idioms, with which Bolingbroke had perhaps injected him.

I have been told that the couplet by which he declared his own ear to be moſt gratified was this:

Lo, where Mœotis ſleeps, and hardly flows
The freezing Tanais through a waſte of ſnows.

But the reaſon of this preference I cannot diſcover.

It is remarked by Watts, that there is ſcarcely a happy combination of Words, or a phraiſe poetically elegant in the Engliſh language, which Pope has not inſerted into his verſion of Homer. How he obtained poſſeſſion of ſo many beauties of ſpeech, it were deſirous to know. That he gleaned from authors, obſcure as well as eminent, what he thought brilliant or uſeful, and preſerved it all in a regular collection, is not unlikely. When, in his laſt years, Hall's Satires were ſhown him, he wiſhed that he had ſeen them ſooner.

New ſentiments and new images others may produce; but to attempt any further improvement of verſification will be dangerous. Art and diligence have now done their beſt, and what ſhall be added will be the effort of tedious toil and and needleſs curioſity.

After all this, it is ſurely ſuperfluous to anſwer their queſtion that has once been aſked, Whether Pope was a poet? otherwiſe than by aſking in return, If Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumſcribe poetry by definition will only ſhew the narrowneſs of the definer, though a definition which ſhall exclude Pope will not eaſily be made. Let us look round upon the preſent time, and back upon the paſt; let us enquire to whom the voice of mankind has decreed the wreath of poetry; let their productions be examined, and their claims ſtated, and the pretenſion of Pope will no more be diſputed. Had he given the world only his verſion, the name of poet muſt have been allowed him: if the writer of the *Iliad* were to claſs his ſucceſſors, he would aſſign a very high place to his tranſlator, without requiring any other evidence of Genius.

The following Letter, of which the original is in the hands of the Lord Hardwicke, was communicated to me by the kindneſs of Mr. Jodrell.

"To Mr. BRIDGES, at the Biſhop of London's, at Fulham.

"SIR,

THE favour of your Letter, with your Remarks, can never be enough acknowledged; and the ſpeed, with which

you diſcharged ſo troubleſome a taſk, doubles the obligation.

"I muſt own, you have pleaſed me very much by the commendations ſo ill beſtowed upon me; but, I aſſure you, much more by the frankneſs of your cenſure, which I ought to take the more kindly of the two, as it is more advantageous to a ſcribbler to be improved in his judgment than to be ſoothed in his vanity. The greater part of thoſe deviations from the Greek, which you have obſerved, I was led into by Chapman and Hobbes; who are (it ſeems) as much celebrated for their knowledge of the original, as they are decryed for the badneſs of their tranſlations. Chapman pretends to have reſtored the genuine ſenſe of the author, from the miſtakes of all former explainers, in ſeveral hundred places: and the Cambridge editors of the large Homer, in Greek and Latin, attributed ſo much to Hobbes, that they confeſs they have corrected the old Latin interpretation very often by his verſion. For my part, I generally took the author's meaning to be as you have explained it; yet their authority, joined to the knowledge of my own imperfectneſs in the language, over-ruled me. However, Sir, you may be confident I think you in the right, becauſe you happen to be of my opinion: (for men, let them ſay what they will, never approve any other's ſenſe, but as it ſquares with their own.) But you have made me much more proud of, and poſitive in my judgment, ſince it is ſtrengthened by yours. I think your criticiſm, which regard the expreſſion, very juſt, and ſhall make my profit of them: To give you ſome proof that I am in earneſt, I will alter three verſes on your bare objection, though I have Mr. Dryden's example for each of them. And this, I hope, you will account no ſmall piece of obedience, from one, who values the authority of one true poet above that of twenty critics or commentators. But though I ſpeak thus of commentators, I will continue to read carefully all I can procure, to make up, that way, for my own want of critical underſtanding in the original beauties of Homer. Though the greateſt of them are certainly thoſe of the Invention and Deſign, which are not at all confined to the language: for the diſtinguiſhing excellencies of Homer are (by the conſent of the beſt critics of all nations) firſt in the manners, (which include all the ſpeeches, as being no other than the repreſentations of each perſon's manners by his words:) and then in that rapture and

fire, which carries you away with him, with that wonderful force, that no man who has a true poetical ſpirit is maſter of himſelf, while he reads him, Homer makes you intereſted and concerned before you are aware, all at once; whereas Virgil does it by ſoft degrees. This, I believe, is what a tranſlator of Homer ought principally to imitate; and it is very hard for any tranſlator to come up to it, becauſe the chief reaſon why all tranſlations fall ſhort of their originals is, that the very conſtraint they are obliged to, renders them heavy and diſpirited.

"The great beauty of Homer's language, as I take it, conſiſts in that noble ſimplicity, which runs through all his works; (and yet his diction, contrary to what one would imagine conſiſtent with ſimplicity, is at the ſame time very copious) I don't know how I have run into this pedantry in a Letter, but I find I have ſaid too much, as well as ſpoken too inconſiderately; what farther thoughts I have upon this ſubject, I ſhall be glad to communicate to you (for my own improvement) when we meet; which is a happineſs I very earneſtly deſire, as I do likewiſe ſome opportunity of proving how much I think myſelf obliged to your friendſhip, and how truly I am, Sir,

Your moſt faithful, humble ſervant,

A. Pope."

The Criticiſm upon Pope's Epitaphs, which was printed in *The Visitor*, is placed here, being too minute and particular to be inſerted in the Life.

Every Art is beſt taught by example. Nothing contributes more to the cultivation of propriety than remarks on the works of thoſe who have moſt excelled. I ſhall therefore endeavour, at this *visit*, to entertain the young ſtudents in poetry, with an examination of Pope's Epitaph's.

To define an epitaph is uſeleſs; every one knows that it is an inſcription on a tomb. An epitaph, therefore, implies no particular character of writing, but may be compoſed in verſe or proſe. It is indeed commonly panegyrical; becauſe we are ſeldom diſtinguiſhed with a ſtone but by our friends; but it has no rule to reſtrain or molify it, except this, that it ought not to be longer than common beholders may be expected to have leiſure and patience to peruſe.

I.

On CHARLES *Earl of* DORSET, *in the Church of Wythyham in Sussex.*

Dorſet, the grace of courts, the Muſe's pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, dy'd.
The ſcourge of pride, though ſanctify'd or great,
Of feps in learning, and of knaves in ſtate;
Yet ſoft in nature, though ſevere his lay,
His anger moral, and his wiſdom gay.
Bleſt ſatyriſt! who touch'd the mean ſo true,
As ſhow'd, Vice had his hate and pity too.
Bleſt courtier! who could king and country pleaſe,
Yet ſacred kept his friendſhip, and his eaſe.
Bleſt peer! his great forefather's every grace
Reflecting, and reflected on his race;
Where other Buckhurſts, other Dorſets ſhine,
And patriots ſtill, or poets, deck the line.

The firſt diſtich of this epitaph contains a kind of information which few would want, that the man, for whom the tomb was erected, *died.* There are indeed ſome qualities worthy of praiſe aſcribed to the dead, but none that were likely to exempt him from the lot of man, or incline us much to wonder that he ſhould die. What is meant by *judge of nature*, is not eaſy to ſay. Nature is not the object of human judgment; for it is vain to judge where we cannot alter. If by nature is meant, what is commonly called *nature* by the critics, a juſt repreſentation of things really exiſting, and actions really performed, nature cannot be properly oppoſed to *art*; nature being, in this ſenſe, only the beſt effect of *art.*

The ſcourge of pride.

Of this couplet, the ſecond line is not what is intended, an illuſtration of the former. *Pride*, in the *Great*, is indeed well enough connected with knaves in ſtate, though *knaves* is a word rather too ludicrous and light; but the mention of *ſanctified* pride will not lead the thoughts to *fops in learning*, but rather to ſome ſpecies of tyranny or oppreſſion, ſomething more gloomy and more formidable than foppery.

Yet ſoft is nature——

This is a high compliment, but was not firſt beſtowed on Dorſet by Pope. The next verſe is extremely beautiful.

Bleſt satyrist!——

In this diſtich is another line of which Pope was not the author. I do not mean to blame theſe imitations with much harſhneſs; in long performances they are ſcarcely to be avoided, and in ſhorter they may be indulged, becauſe the train of the compoſition may naturally involve them, or the ſcantineſs of the ſubject allow little choice. However what is borrowed is not to be enjoyed as our own, and it is the buſineſs of critical juſtice to give every bird of the Muſes his proper feather.

Bleſt courtier!——

Whether a courtier can properly be commended for keeping his *ease sacred*, may perhaps be diſputable. To pleaſe king and country, without ſacrificing friendſhip to any change of times, was a very uncommon inſtance of prudence or felicity, and deſerved to be kept ſeparate from ſo poor a commendation as care of his eaſe. I wiſh our poets would attend a little more accurately to the uſe of the word *sacred*, which ſurely ſhould never be applied in a ſerious compoſition, but where ſome reference may be made to a higher Being, or where ſome duty is exacted or implied. A man may keep his friendſhip *sacred*, becauſe promiſes of friendſhip are very awful ties; but methinks he cannot, but in a burleſque ſenſe, be ſaid to keep his eaſe *sacred*.

Bleſt peer!

The bleſſing aſcribed to the *peer* has no connection with his peerage; they might happen to any other man, whoſe anceſtors were remembered, or whoſe poſterity were likely to be regarded.

I know not whether this epitaph be worthy either of the writer or of the man entombed.

II.

On Sir WILLIAM TRUMBAL, *one of the principal Secretaries of State to King* WILLIAM III. *who having resigned his place, died in his retirement, at Easthamstead, in Berkshire*, 1716.

A pleasing form, a firm, yet cautious mind,
Sincere, though prudent; constant, yet resign'd;
Honour unchang'd, a principle profest,
Fix'd to one side, but moderate to the rest:
An honest courtier, yet a patriot too,
Just to his prince, and to his country too.
Fill'd with the sense of age, the fire of youth,
A scorn of wrangling, yet a zeal for truth;
A generous faith, from superstition free;
A love to peace, and hate of tyranny;
Such this man was; who now, from earth remov'd,
At length enjoys that liberty he lov'd.

In this epitaph, as in many others, there appears, at the first view, a fault which I think scarcely any beauty can compensate. The name is omitted. The end of an epitaph is to convey some account of the dead; and to what purpose is any thing told of him whose name is concealed? An epitaph, and a history, of a nameless hero, are equally absurd, since the virtues and qualities so recounted in either, are scattered at the mercy of fortune to be appropriated by guess. The name, it is true, may be read upon the stone; but what obligation has it to the poet, whose verses wander over the earth, and leave their subject behind them, and who is forced, like an unskilful painter, to make his purpose known by adventitious help.

This epitaph is wholly without elevation, and contains nothing striking or particular; but the poet is not to be blamed for the defects of his subject. He said perhaps the best that could be said. There are, however, some defects which were not made necessary by the character in which he was employed. There is no opposition between an *honest courtier* and a *patriot*; for an *honest courtier* cannot but be a *patriot*.

It was unsuitable to the nicety required in short compositions, to close his verse with the word *too*: every rhyme should be a word of emphasis, nor can this rule be safely neglected, except where the length of the poem makes slight inaccuracies excusable, or allows room for beauties sufficient to overpower the effects of petty faults.

At the beginning of the seventh line the word *filled* is weak and prosaic, having no particular adaptation to any of the words that follow it.

The thought in the last line is impertinent, having no connection with the foregoing character, nor with the con-

dition of the man deſcribed. Had the epitaph been written on the poor conſpirator * who died lately in priſon, after a confinement of more than forty years, without any crime proved againſt him, the ſentiment had been juſt and pathetical; but why ſhould Trumbal be congratulated upon his liberty who had never known reſtraint?

III.

On the Hon. SIMON HARCOURT, *only Son of the Lord Chancellor* HARCOURT, *at the Church of Stanton-Harcourt in Oxfordshire*, 1720.

To this ſad ſhrine, whoe'er thou art draw dear,
He lies the friend moſt lov'd, the ſon moſt dear:
Who ne'er knew joy, but friendſhip might divide,
Or gave his father grief but when he dy'd.
How vain is reaſon, eloquence how weak!
If Pope muſt tell what Harcourt cannot ſpeak.
Oh, let thy once-lov'd friend inſcribe thy ſtone,
And with a father's ſorrows mix his own!

This epitaph is principally remarkable for the artful introduction of the name, which is inſerted with a peculiar felicity, to which chance muſt concur with genius, which no man can hope to attain twice, and which cannot be copied but with ſervile imitation.

I cannot but wiſh that, of this inſcription, the two laſt lines had been omitted, as they take away from the energy what they do not add to the ſenſe.

IV.

On JAMES CRAGGS, *Esq*;
in Westminster-Abbey.

JACOBUS CRAGGS,
REGI MAGNAE BRITANNIAE A SECRETIS
ET CONSILIIS SANCTIORIBVS
PRINCIPIS PARITER AC POPULI AMOR ET
DELICIAE:
VIXIT TITULIS ET INVIDIA MAJOR,
ANNOS HEV PAVCOS, XXXV.
OB. FEB. XVI MDCCXX.

* *Bernardi.*

Stateſman, yet friend to truth! of ſoul ſincere,
In action faithful, and in honour clear!
Who broke no promiſe, ſerv'd no private end,
Who gain'd no title, and who loſt no friend;
Ennobled by himſelf, by all approv'd,
Prais'd, wept, and honour'd, by the Muſe he lov'd.

The lines on Craggs were not originally intended for an epitaph; and therefore ſome faults are to be imputed to the violence with which they are torn from the poem that firſt contained them. We may, however, obſerve ſome defects. There is a redundancy of words in the firſt couplet: it is ſuperfluous to tell of him, who was *sincere*, *true*, and *faithful*, that he was *in honour clear*.

There ſeems to be an oppoſition intended in the fourth line, which is not very obvious; where is the relation between the two poſitions, that he *gained no title* and *lost no friend?*

It may be proper here to remark the abſurdity of joining in the ſame inſcription, Latin and Engliſh, or verſe and proſe. If either language be preferable to the other, let that only be uſed; for no reaſon can be given why part of the information ſhould be given in one tongue, and part in another, on a tomb, more than any other place, on any other occaſion; and to tell all that can be conveniently told in verſe, and then to call in the help of proſe, has always the appearance of a very artleſs expedient, or of an attempt unaccompliſhed. Such an epitaph reſembles the converſation of a foreigner, who tells part of his meaning by words, and conveys part by ſigns.

V.

Intended for Mr. Rowe.
In Weſtminſter-Abbey.

Thy reliques, Rowe, to this fair urn we truſt,
And ſacred, place by Dryden's awful duſt:
Beneath a rude and nameleſs ſtone he lies,
To which thy tomb ſhall guide enquiring eyes;
Peace to thy gentle ſhade, and endleſs reſt!
Bleſt in thy genius, in thy love too bleſt!
One grateful woman to thy fame ſupplies
What a whole thankleſs land to his denies.

Of this inſcription the chief fault is, that it belongs leſs to Rowe, for whom it was written, than to Dryden, who was

buried near him; and indeed gives very little information concerning either.

To wiſh, *Peace to thy ſhade*, is too mythological to be admitted into a chriſtian temple: the ancient worſhip has infected almoſt all our other compoſitions, and might therefore be contented to ſpare our epitaphs. Let fiction, at leaſt, ceaſe with life, and let us be ſerious over the grave.

VI.

On Mrs. CORBET, *Who died of a Cancer in her Breast.*

Here reſts a woman, good without pretence,
Bleſt with plain reaſon, and with ſober ſenſe:
No conqueſt ſhe, but o'er herſelf deſir'd;
No arts eſſay'd, but not to be admir'd.
Paſſion and pride were to her ſoul unknown,
Convinc'd that Virtue only is our own.
So unaffected, ſo compos'd a mind,
So firm, yet ſoft, ſo ſtrong, yet ſo refin'd,
Heaven, as its pureſt gold, by tortures try'd,
The ſaint ſuſtain'd, but the woman dy'd.

I have always conſidered this as the moſt valuable of all Pope's epitaphs; the ſubject of it is a character not diſcriminated by any ſhining or eminent peculiarities; yet that which really makes, though not the ſplendour, the felicity of life, and that which every wiſe man will chooſe for his final and laſting companion in the langour of age, in the quiet of privacy, when he departs weary and diſguſted from the oſtentatious, the volatile, and the vain. Of ſuch a character, which the dull overlook, and the gay deſpiſe, it was fit that the value ſhould be made known, and the dignity eſtabliſhed. Domeſtic virtue, as it is exerted without great occaſions, or conſpicuous conſequences, in an even unnoted tenor, required the genius of Pope to diſplay it in ſuch a manner as might attract regard, and enforce reverence. Who can forbear to lament that this amiable woman has no name in the verſes?

If the particular lines of this inſcription be examined, it will appear leſs faulty than the reſt. There is ſcarce one line taken from common places, unleſs it be that in which *only Virtue* is ſaid to be *our own*. I once heard a Lady of great beauty and excellence object to the fourth line, that

it contained an unnatural and incredible panegyric. Of this let the Ladies judge.

VII.

On the Monument of the Hon. ROBERT DIGBY, *and of his Sister* MARY, *erected by their Father the Lord* DIGBY, *in the Church of Sherborne in Dorsetshire*, 1727.

Go! fair example of untainted youth,
Of modeſt wiſdom, and pacific truth:
Compos'd in ſufferings, and in joy ſedate,
Good without noiſe, without pretenſion great.
Juſt of thy word, in every thought ſincere,
Who knew no wiſh but what the world might hear:
Of ſofteſt manners, unaffected mind,
Lover of peace, and friend of human kind:
Go, live! for heaven's eternal year is thine,
Go, and exalt thy mortal to divine.
And thou, bleſt maid! attendant on his doom,
Penſive haſt follow'd to the ſilent tomb,
Steer'd the ſame courſe to the ſame quiet ſhore,
Not parted long, and now to part no more!
Go, then, where only bliſs ſincere is known!
Go, where to love and to enjoy are one!
Yet take theſe tears, Mortality's relief;
And tell we ſhare your joys, forgive our grief:
Theſe little rites, a ſtone, a verſe receive,
'Tis all a father, all a friend can give!

This epitaph contains of the brother only a general indiſcriminate character, and of the ſiſter tells nothing but that ſhe died. The difficulty in writing epitaphs is to give a particular and appropriate praiſe. This, however, is not always to be performed, whatever be the diligence or ability of the writer; for the greater part of mankind *have no character at all*, have little that diſtinguiſhes them from others equally good or bad, and therefore nothing can be ſaid of them which may not be applied with equal propriety to a thouſand more. It is indeed no great panegyric, that there is incloſed in this tomb one who was born in one year, and died in another; yet many uſeful and amiable lives have been ſpent, which yet leave little materials for any other memorial. Theſe are however not the proper ſubjects of poetry; and whenever friendſhip, or any other motive, obliges a poet to write on ſuch ſubjects, he muſt

be forgiven if he ſometimes wanders in generalities, and utters the ſame praiſes over different tombs.

The ſcantineſs of human praiſes can ſcarcely be made more apparent, than by remarking how often Pope has, in the few epitaphs which he compoſed, found it neceſſary to borrow from himſelf. The fourteen epitaphs, which he has written, compriſe about an hundred and forty lines, in which there are more repetitions than will eaſily be found in all the reſt of his works. In the eight lines which make the character of Digby, there is ſcarce any thought, or word, which may not be found in the other epitaphs.

The ninth line, which is far the ſtrongeſt and moſt elegant, is borrowed from Dryden. The concluſion is the ſame with that on Harcourt, but is here more elegant and better connected.

VIII.

On Sir GODFREY KNELLER.
In Westminster-Abbey, 1723.

Kneller, by heaven, and not a maſter taught,
Whoſe art was nature, and whoſe pictures thought;
Now for two ages, having ſnatch'd from fate
Whate'er was beauteous, or whate'er was great,
Lies crown'd with Princes honours, Poets lays,
Due to his merit, and brave thirſt of praiſe.
Living, great Nature fear'd he might outvie
Her works; and dying, fears herſelf may die.

Of this epitaph the firſt couplet is good, the ſecond not bad, the third is deformed with a broken metaphor, the word *crowned* not being applicable to the *honours* or the *lays*, and the fourth is not only borrowed from the epitaph on Raphael, but of very harſh conſtruction.

IX.

On General HENRY WITHERS.
In Westminster-Abbey, 1729.

Here, Withers, reſt! thou braveſt, gentleſt mind,
Thy country's friend, but more of human kind,
O! born to arms! O! worth in youth approv'd!
O! ſoft humanity in age belov'd!
For thee the hardy veteran drops a tear,
And the gay courtier feels the ſigh ſincere.

Withers, adieu! yet not with thee remove
Thy martial ſpirit, or thy ſocial love!
Amidſt corruption, luxury and rage,
Still leave ſome ancient virtues to our age:
Nor let us ſay (thoſe Engliſh glories gone)
The laſt true Briton lies beneath this ſtone.

The epitaph on Withers affords another inſtance of common places, though ſomewhat diverſified, by mingled qualities, and the peculiarity of a profeſſion.

The ſecond couplet is abrupt, general, and unpleaſing; exclamation ſeldom ſucceeds in our language; and, I think, it may be obſerved that the particle O! uſed at the beginning of a ſentence, always offends.

The third couplet is more happy; the value expreſſed for him, by different ſorts of men, raiſes him to eſteem; there is yet ſomething of the common cant of ſuperficial ſatiriſts, who ſuppoſes that the inſincerity of a courtier deſtroys all his ſenſations, and that he is equally a diſſembler to the living and the dead.

At the third couplet I ſhould wiſh the epitaph to cloſe, but that I ſhould be unwilling to loſe the two next lines, which yet are dearly bought if they cannot be retained without the four that follow them.

X.

On Mr. Elijah Fenton.
At Eaſthamſtead in Berkſhire, 1730.

This modeſt ſtone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly ſay, Here lies an honeſt man:
A poet, bleſt beyond the poet's fate,
Whom Heaven kept ſacred from the Proud and Great:
Foe to loud praiſe, and friend to learned eaſe,
Content with ſcience in the vale of peace.
Calmly he look'd on either life; and here
Saw nothing to regret, or there to fear;
From Nature's temperate feaſt roſe ſatisfy'd,
Thank'd heaven that he had liv'd, and that he dy'd.

The firſt couplet of this epitaph is borrowed from *Craſhaw*. The four next lines contain a ſpecies of praiſe peculiar, original, and juſt. Here, therefore, the inſcription ſhould have ended, the latter part containing nothing but what is common to every man who is wiſe and good. The

character of Fenton was so amiable, that I cannot forbear to wish for some poet or biographer to display it more fully for the advantage of posterity. If he did not stand in the first rank of genius, he may claim a place in the second; and, whatever criticism may object to his writings, censure could find very little to blame in his life.

XI.

On Mr. Gay.

In Westminster-Abbey, 1732.

Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
In wit, a man; simplicity, a child:
With native humour tempering virtuous rage,
Form'd to delight at once and lash the age:
Above temptation, in a low estate,
And uncorrupted, ev'n among the Great:
A safe companion, and an easy friend,
Unblam'd through life, lamented in thy end.
These are thy honours! not that here thy bust
Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy dust;
But that the Worthy and the Good shall say,
Striking their pensive bosoms—Here lies Gay.

As Gay was the favourite of our author, this epitaph was probably written with an uncommon degree of attention; yet it is not more successfully executed than the rest, for it will not always happen that the success of a poet is proportionate to his labour. The same observation may be extended to all works of imagination, which are often influenced by causes wholly out of the performer's power, by hints of which he perceives not the origin, by sudden elevations of mind which he cannot produce in himself, and which sometimes rise when he expects them least.

The two parts of the first line are only echoes of each other; *gentle manners* and *mild affections*, if they mean any thing, must mean the same.

That Gay was a *man in wit* is a very frigid commendation; to have the wit of a man is not much for a poet. The *wit of Man*, and the *simplicity of a Child*, make a poor and vulgar contrast, and raise no ideas of excellence, either intellectual or moral.

In the next couplet *rage* is less properly introduced after the mention of *mildness and gentleness*, which are made the

conſtituents of his character; for a man ſo *mild* and *gentle* to *temper* his *rage*, was not difficult.

The next line is unharmonious in its ſound, and mean in its conception; the oppoſition is obvious, and the word *lash* uſed abſolutely, and without any modification, is groſs and improper.

To be *above temptation* in poverty, and *free from corruption among the Great*, is indeed ſuch a peculiarity as deſerved notice. But to be a *ſafe companion* is praiſe merely negative, ariſing not from the poſſeſſion of virtue, but the abſence of vice, and that one of the moſt odious.

As little can be added to his character, by aſſerting that he was *lamented in his end.* Every man that dies is, at leaſt by the writer of his epitaph, ſuppoſed to be lamented, and therefore this general lamentation does no honour to Gay.

The firſt eight lines have no grammar; the adjectives are without any ſubſtantive, and the epithets without a ſubject.

The thought in the laſt line, that Gay is buried in the boſoms of the *worthy* and the *good*, who are diſtinguiſhed only to lengthen the line, is ſo dark that few underſtand it; and ſo harſh, when it is explained, that ſtill fewer approve.

XII.

Intended for Sir ISAAC NEWTON, *In Weſtminſter-Abbey.*

ISAACUS NEWTONIUS:
Quem Immortalem
Teſtantur, *Tempus*, *Natura*, *Cœlum:*
Mortalem
Hoc marmor fatetur.

Nature, and Nature's laws, lay hid in night,
God ſaid, *Let Newton be!* And all was light.

Of this epitaph, ſhort as it is, the faults ſeem not to be very few. Why part ſhould be Latin and part Engliſh, it is not eaſy to diſcover. In the Latin, the oppoſition of *Immortalis* and *Mortalis*, is a mere ſound, or a mere quibble; he is not *immortal* in any ſenſe contrary to that in which he is *mortal.*

In the verſes the thought is obvious, and the words *night* and *light* are too nearly allied.

XIII.

On EDMUND *Duke of* BUCKINGHAM, *who died in the 19th Year of his Age*, 1735.

If modeſt youth, with cool reflection crown'd,
And every opening virtue blooming round,
Could ſave a parent's juſteſt pride from fate,
Or add one patriot to a ſinking ſtate;
This weeping marble had not aſk'd thy tear,
Or ſadly told, how many hopes lie here!
The living virtue now had ſhone approv'd,
The ſenate heard him, and his country lov'd.
Yet ſofter honours, and leſs noiſy fame
Attend the ſhade of gentle Buckingham:
In whom a race, for courage fam'd and art,
Ends in the milder merit of the heart;
And chiefs or ſages long to Britain given,
Pays the laſt tribute of a ſaint to heaven.

This epitaph Mr. Warburton prefers to the reſt, but I know not for what reaſon. To *crown* with *reflection* is ſurely a mode of ſpeech approaching to nonſenſe. *Opening virtues blooming round*, is ſomething like tautology; the ſix following lines are poor and proſaic. Art is in another couplet uſed for *arts*, that a rhyme may be had to *heart*. The ſix laſt lines are the beſt, but not excellent.

The reſt of his ſepulchral performances hardly deſerve the notice of criticiſm. The contemptible *Dialogue* between HE and SHE ſhould have been ſuppreſſed for the author's ſake.

In his laſt epitaph on himſelf, in which he attempts to be jocular upon one of the few things that make wiſe men ſerious, he confounds the living man with the dead:

Under this ſtone, or under this hill,
Or under this turf, &c.

When a man is once buried, the queſtion, under what he is buried, is eaſily decided. He forgot that though he wrote the epitaph in a ſtate of uncertainty, yet it could not be laid over him till his grave was made. Such is the folly of wit when it is ill employed.

The world has but little new; even this wretchedneſs ſeems to have been borrowed from the following tuneleſs lines:

Ludovici Areoſti humantur oſſa
Sub hoc marmore, vel ſub hac humo, ſeu
Sub quicquid voluit benignus hæres
Sive hærede benignior comes, ſeu
Opportunius incidens Viator;
Nam ſcire haud potuit fatura, ſed nec
Tanti erat vacuum ſibi cadaver
Ut utnam cuperet parare vivens,
Vivens iſta tamen ſibi paravit.
Quæ inſcribi voluit ſuo ſepulchro
Olim ſiquod haberetis ſepulchrum.

Surely Arioſto did not venture to expect that his trifle would have ever had ſuch an illuſtrious imitator.

PITT.

CHRISTOPHER PITT, of whom whatever I ſhall relate, more than has been already publiſhed, I owe to the kind communication of Dr. Warton, was born in 1699 at Blandford, the ſon of a phyſician much eſteemed.

He was, in 1714, received as a ſcholar into Wincheſter College, where he was diſtinguiſhed by exerciſes of uncommon elegance; and, at his removal to New College in 1719, preſented to the electors, as the product of his private and voluntary ſtudies, a complete verſion of Lucan's poem, which he did not then know to have been tranſlated by Rowe.

This is an inſtance of early diligence which well deſerves to be recorded. The ſuppreſſion of ſuch a work, recommended by ſuch uncommon circumſtances, is to be regretted. It is indeed culpable, to load libraries with ſuperfluous books; but incitements to early excellence are never ſuperfluous, and from this example the danger is not great of many imitations.

When he had reſided at his College three years, he was preſented to the rectory of Pempern in Dorſetſhire (1722), by his relation, Mr. Pitt of Stratfeildſea in Hampſhire; and, reſigning his fellowſhip, continued at Oxford two years longer, till he became Maſter of Arts (1724).

He probably about this time tranſlated *Vida's Art of Poetry*, which Triſtram's ſplendid edition had then made popular. In this tranſlation he diſtinguiſhed himſelf, both by its general elegance, and by the ſkillful adaption of his numbers, to the images expreſſed; a beauty which Vida has with great ardour enforced and exemplified.

He then retired to his living, a place very pleaſing by its ſituation, and therefore likely to excite the imagination of a poet; where he paſſed the reſt of his life, reverenced for his virtue, and beloved for the ſoftneſs of his temper and the eaſineſs of his manners. Before ſtrangers he had

ſomething of the ſcholar's timidity or diſtruſt; but when he became familiar, he was in a very high degree chearful and entertaining. His general benevolence procured general reſpect; and he paſſed a life placid and honourable, neither too great for the kindneſs of the low, nor too low for the notice of the great.

At what time he compoſed his miſcellany, publiſhed in 1727, it is not eaſy nor neceſſary to know: thoſe which have dates appear to have been very early productions, and I have not obſerved that any riſe above mediocrity.

The ſucceſs of his *Vida* animated him to a higher undertaking; and in his thirtieth year he publiſhed a verſion of the firſt book of the Eneid. This being, I ſuppoſe, commended by his friends, he ſome time afterwards added three or four more; with an advertiſement, in which he repreſents himſelf as tranſlating with great indifference, and with a progreſs of which himſelf was hardly conſcious. This can hardly be true, and, if true, is nothing to the reader.

At laſt, without any further contention with his modeſty, or any awe of the name of Dryden, he gave us a complete Engliſh Eneid, which I am ſorry not to ſee joined in the late publication with his other poems. It would have been pleaſing to have an opportunity of comparing the two beſt tranſlations that perhaps were ever produced by one nation of the ſame author.

Pitt engaging as a rival with Dryden, naturally obſerved his failures, and avoided them; and, as he wrote after Pope's Iliad, he had an example of an exact, equable, and ſplendid verſification. With theſe advantages, ſeconded by great diligence, he might ſucceſsfully labour particular paſſages, and eſcape many errors. If the two verſions are compared, perhaps the reſult would be, that Dryden leads the reader forward by his general vigour and ſprightlineſs, and Pitt often ſtops him to contemplate the excellence of a ſingle couplet; that Dryden's faults are forgotten in the hurry of delight, and that Pitt's beautie's are neglected in the langour of a cold and liſtleſs peruſal; that Pitt pleaſes the critics, and Dryden the people; that Pitt is quoted, and Dryden read.

He did not long enjoy the reputation which this great work deſervedly conferred; for he left the world in 1748, and lies buried under a ſtone at Blandford, on which is this inſcription:

In memory of
CHR. PITT, clerk, M. A.
Very eminent
for his talents in poetry;
and yet more
for the universal candour of
his mind, and the primitive
simplicity of his manners.
He lived innocent,
and died beloved,
Apr. 13, 1748,
aged 48.

THOMSON.

JAMES THOMSON, the ſon of a miniſter well eſteemed for his piety and diligence, was born September 7, 1700, at Ednam, in the ſhire of Roxburgh, of which his father was paſtor. His mother, whoſe name was hume, inherited as co-heireſs a portion of a ſmall eſtate. The revenue of a pariſh in Scotland is ſeldom large, and it was probably in commiſeration of the difficulty with which Mr. Thomſon ſupported his family, having nine children, that Mr. Riccarton, a noighbouring miniſter, diſcovering in James uncommon promiſes of future excellence, undertook to ſuperintend his education, and provide him books.

He was taught the common rudiments of learning at the ſchool of Jedburgh, a place which he delights to recollect in his poem of *Autumn;* but was not conſidered by his maſter as ſuperior to common boys, though in thoſe early days he amuſed his patron and his friends with poetical compoſitions; with which however he ſo little pleaſed himſelf, that on every new-year's day he threw into the fire all the productions of the foregoing year.

From the ſchool he was removed to Edinburgh, where he had not reſided two years when his father died, and left all his children to the care of their mother, who raiſed upon her little eſtate what money a mortgage could afford, and, removing with her family to Edinburgh, lived to ſee her ſon riſing into eminence.

The deſign of Thomſon's friends was to breed him a miniſter. He lived at Edinburgh, as at ſchool, without diſtinction or expectation, till, at the uſual time, he performed a probationary exerciſe by explaining a pſalm. His diction was ſo poetically ſplendid, that Mr. Hamilton, the profeſſor of Divinity, reproved him for ſpeaking language unintelligible to a popular audience, and he cenſured one of his expreſſions as indecent, if not profane.

This rebuke is reported to have repreſſed his thoughts of an eccleſiaſtical character, and he probably cultivated with new diligence his bloſſoms of poetry, which, however were in ſome danger of a blaſt; for ſubmitting his productions to ſome who thought themſelves qualified to criticiſe, he heard of nothing but faults, but finding other judges more favourable, he did not ſuffer himſelf to ſink into deſpondence.

He eaſily diſcovered that the only ſtage on which a poet could appear, with any hope of advantage, was London; a place too wide for the operation of petty competition and private malignity, where merit might ſoon become conſpicuous, and would find friends as ſoon as it became reputable to befriend it. A lady, who was acquainted with his mother, adviſed him to the journey, and promiſed ſome countenance or aſſiſtance, which at laſt he never received; however, he juſtified his adventure by her encouragement, and came to ſeek in London patronage and fame.

At his arrival he found his way to Mr. Mallet, then tutor to the ſons of the duke of Montroſe. He had recommendations to ſeveral perſons of conſequence, which he had tied carefully up in his handkerchief; but as he paſſed along the ſtreet, with the gaping curioſity of a new-comer, his attention was upon every thing rather than his pocket, and his magazine of credentials was ſtolen from him.

His firſt want was of a pair of ſhoes. For the ſupply of all his neceſſities, his whole fund was his *Winter*, which for a time could find no purchaſer; till, at laſt, Mr. Millan was perſuaded to buy it at a low price; and this low price he had for ſome time reaſon to regret; but, by accident, Mr. Whatley, a man not wholly unknown among authors, happening to turn his eye upon it, was ſo delighted, that he ran from place to place celebrating its excellence. Thomſon obtained likewiſe the notice of Aaron Hill, whom, being friendleſs and indigent, and glad of kindneſs, he courted with every expreſſion of ſervile adulation.

Winter was dedicated to Sir Spencer Compton, but attracted no regard from him to the author; till Aaron Hill awakened his attention by ſome verſes addreſſed to Thomſon, and publiſhed in one of the newſpapers, which cenſured the great for their neglect of ingenious men. Thomſon then received a preſent of twenty guineas, of which he gives this account to Mr. Hill:

"I hinted to you in my laſt, that on Saturday morning I was with Sir Spencer Compton. A certain gentleman, without my deſire, ſpoke to him concerning me; his anſwer was, that I had never come near him. Then the gentleman put the queſtion, If he deſired that I ſhould wait on him? he returned, he did. On this, the gentleman gave me an introductory Letter to him. He received me in what they commonly call a civil manner; aſked me ſome common-place queſtions, and made me a preſent of twenty guineas. I am very ready to own that the preſent was larger than my performance deſerved; and ſhall aſcribe it to his generoſity, or any other cauſe, rather than the merit of the addreſs."

The poem, which, being of a new kind, few would venture at firſt to like, by degrees gained upon the public; and one edition was very ſpeedily ſucceeded by another.

Thomſon's credit was now high, and every day brought him new friends; among others Dr. Rundle, a man afterwards unfortunately famous, fought his acquaintance, and found his qualities ſuch, that he recommended him to the lord chancellor Talbot.

Winter was accompanied, in many editions, not only with a preface and a dedication, but with poetical praiſes by Mr. Hill, Mr. Mallet (then *Malloch)*, and *Mira*, the fictitious name of a lady once too well known. Why the dedications are, to *Winter* and the other ſeaſons, contrarily to cuſtom, left out in the collected works, the reader may enquire.

The next year (1727) he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by three publications; of *Summer*, in purſuance of his plan; of *a Poem on the Death of Sir Isaac Newton*, which he was enabled to perform as an exact philoſopher by the inſtruction of Mr. Grey; and of *Britannia*, a kind of poetical invective againſt the miniſtry, whom the nation then thought not forward enough in reſenting the depredations of the Spaniards. By this piece he declared himſelf an adherent to the oppoſition, and had therefore no favour to expect from the Court.

Thomſon, having been ſome time entertained in the family of the lord Binning, was deſirous of teſtifying his gratitude by making him the patron of his *Summer;* but the ſame kindneſs which had firſt diſpoſed lord Binning to encourage him, determined him to refuſe the dedication, which was by his advice addreſſed to Mr. Doddington; a

man who had more power to advance the reputation and fortune of a poet.

Spring was publiſhed next year, with a dedication to the counteſs of Hertford; whoſe practice it was to invite every Summer ſome poet into the country, to hear her verſes, and aſſiſt her ſtudies. This honour was one Summer conferred on Thomſon, who took more delight in carouſing with lord Hertford and his friends than aſſiſting her ladyſhip's poetical operations, and therefore never received another ſummons.

Autumn, the ſeaſon to which the *Spring* and *Summer* are preparatory, ſtill remaining unſung, and was delayed till he publiſhed (1730) his works collected.

He produced in 1727 the tragedy of *Sophoniſba*, which raiſed ſuch expectation, that every rehearſal was dignified with a ſplendid audience, collected to anticipate the delight that was preparing for the public. It was obſerved however that nobody was much affected, and that the company roſe as from a moral lecture.

It had upon the ſtage no unuſual degree of ſucceſs. Slight accidents will operate upon the taſte of pleaſure. There was a feeble line in the play;

O Sophoniſba, Sophoniſba, O!

This gave occaſion to a waggiſh parody;

O, Jemmy Thomſon, Jemmy Thomſon, O!

which for a while was echoed through the town.

I have been told by Savage, that of the Prologue to *Sophoniſba* the firſt part was written by Pope, who could not be perſuaded to finiſh it, and that the concluding lines were added by Mallet.

Thomſon was not long afterwards, by the influence of Dr. Rundle, ſent to travel with Mr. Charles Talbot, the eldeſt ſon of the Chancellor. He was yet young enough to receive new impreſſions, to have his opinions rectified, and his views enlarged; nor can he be ſuppoſed to have wanted that curioſity which is inſeparable from an active and comprehenſive mind. He may therefore now be ſuppoſed to have revelled in all the joys of intellectual luxury; he was every day feaſted with inſtructive novelties; he lived ſplendidly without expence, and might expect when he returned home a certain eſtabliſhment.

At this time a long courſe of oppoſition to Sir Robert Walpole had filled the nation with clamours for liberty, of which no man felt the want, and with care for liberty, which was not in danger. Thomſon, in his travels on the continent, found or fancied ſo many evils ariſing from the tyranny of other governments, that he reſolved to write a very long poem, in five parts, upon Liberty.

While he was buſy on the firſt book, Mr. Talbot died; and Thomſon, who had been rewarded for his attendance by the place of ſecretary of the Briefs, pays in the initial lines a decent tribute to his memory.

Upon this great poem two years were ſpent, and the author congratulated himſelf upon it as his nobleſt work; but an author and his reader are not always of a mind. *Liberty* called in vain upon her votaries to read her praiſes and reward her encomiaſt: her praiſes were condemned to harbour ſpiders, and to gather duſt; none of Thomſon's performances were ſo little regarded.

The judgment of the public was not erroneous; the recurrence of the ſame images muſt tire in time; an enumeration of examples to prove a poſition which nobody denied, as it was from the beginning ſuperfluous, muſt quickly grow diſguſting.

The poem of *Liberty* does not now appear in its original ſtate; but when the author's works were collected, after his death, was ſhortened by Sir George Lyttelton, with a liberty which, as it has a manifeſt tendency to leſſen the confidence of ſociety, and to confound the characters of authors, by making one man write by the judgment of another, cannot be juſtified by any ſuppoſed propriety of the alteration, or kindneſs of the friend.—I wiſh to ſee it exhibited as its auther left it.

Thomſon now lived in eaſe and plenty, and ſeems for a while to have ſuſpended his poetry; but he was ſoon called back to labour by the death of the Chancellor, for his place then became vacant; and though the lord Hardwicke delayed for ſome time to give it away, Thomſon's baſhfulneſs, or pride, or ſome other motive perhaps not more laudable, withheld him from ſoliciting; and the new Chancellor would not give him what he would not aſk.

He now relapſed to his former indigence; but the prince of Wales was at that time ſtruggling for popularity, and by the influence of Mr. Lyttleton profeſſed himſelf the patron of wit: to him Thomſon was introduced, and being

gaily interrogated about the ſtate of his affairs, ſaid, *that they were in a more poetical posture than formerly;* and had a penſion allowed him of one hundred pounds a year.

Being now obliged to write, he produced (1738) the tragedy of *Agamemnon*, which was much ſhortened in the repreſentation. It had the fate which moſt commonly attends mythological ſtories, and was only endured, but not favoured. It ſtruggled with ſuch difficulty through the firſt night, that Thomſon, coming late to his friends with whom he was to ſup, excuſed his delay by telling them how the ſweat of his diſtreſs had ſo diſordered his wig, that he could not come till he had been refitted by a barber.

He ſo intereſted himſelf in his own drama, that, if I remember right, as he ſat in the upper gallery he accompanied the players by audible recitation, till a friendly hint frighted him to ſilence. Pope countenanced *Agamemnon*, by coming to it the firſt night, and was welcomed to the theatre by a general clap; he had much regard for Thomſon, and once expreſſed it in a poetical Epiſtle ſent to Italy, of which however he abated the value, by tranſplanting ſome of the lines into his Epiſtle to *Arbuthnot*.

About this time the Act was paſſed for licenſing plays, of which the firſt operation was the prohibition of *Guſtavus Vaſa*, a tragedy of Mr. Brooke, whom the public recompenſed by a very liberal ſubſcription; the next was the refuſal of *Edward and Eleonora*, offered by Thomſon. It is hard to diſcover why either play ſhould have been obſtructed. Thomſon likewiſe endeavoured to repair his loſs by a ſubſcription, of which I cannot now tell the ſucceſs.

When the public murmured at the unkind treatment of Thomſon, one of the miniſterial writers remarked, that *he had taken a* Liberty *which was not agreeable to* Britannia *in any* Seaſon.

He was ſoon after employed, in conjunction with Mr. Mallet, to write the Maſque of *Alfred*, which was acted before the Prince at Cliefden-houſe.

His next work (1745) was *Tancred and Sigismunda*, the moſt ſucceſsful of all his tragedies; for it ſtill keeps its turn upon the ſtage. It may be doubted whether he was, either by the bent of nature or habits of ſtudy, much qualified for tragedy. It does not appear that he had much ſenſe of the pathetic, and his diffuſive and deſcriptive ſtyle produced declamation rather than dialogue.

His friend Mr. Lyttelton was now in power, and conferred upon him the office of ſurveyor-general of the Leeward Iſlands; from which, when his deputy was paid, he received about three hundred pounds a year.

The laſt piece that he lived to publiſh was the *Caſtle of Indolence*, which was many years under his hand, but was at laſt finiſhed with great accuracy. The firſt canto opens a ſcene of lazy luxury, that fills the imagination.

He was now at eaſe, but was not long to enjoy it; for, by taking cold on the water between London and Kew, he caught a diſorder, with ſome careleſs exaſperation, ended in a fever that put an end to his life, Auguſt 27, 1748. He was buried in the church of Richmond, without an inſcription; but a monument has been erected to his memory in Weſtminſter-abbey.

Thomſon was of ſtature above the middle ſize, and *more fat than bard beſeems*, of a dull countenance, and a groſs, unanimated, uninviting appearance; ſilent in mingled company, but chearful among ſelect friends, and by his friends very tenderly and warmly beloved.

He left behind him the tragedy of *Coriolanus*, which was, by the zeal of his patron Sir George Lyttelton, brought upon the ſtage for the benefit of his family, and recommended by a Prologue, which Quin, who had long lived with Thomſon in fond intimacy, ſpoke in ſuch a manner as ſhewed him *to be*, on that occaſion, *no actor*. The commencement of this benevolence is very honourable to Quin; who is reported to have delivered Thomſon, then known to him only for his genius, from an arreſt, by a very conſiderable preſent; and its continuance is honourable to both; for friendſhip is not always the ſequel of obligation. By this tragedy a conſiderable ſum was raiſed, of which part diſcharged his debts, and the reſt was remitted to his ſiſters, whom, however removed from them by place or condition, he regarded with great tenderneſs, as will appear by the following Letter, which I communicate with much pleaſure, as it gives me at once an opportunity of recording the fraternal kindneſs of Thomſon, and reflecting on the friendly aſſiſtance of Mr. Boſwell, from whom I received it.

"Hagley in Worceſterſhire,
October the 4th, 1747.

"My dear Siſter,

"I thought you had known me better than to interpret my ſilence into a decay of affection, eſpecially as your be-

havour has always been ſuch as rather to increaſe than diminiſh it. Don't imagine, becauſe I am a bad correſpondent, that I can ever prove an unkind friend and brother. I muſt do myſelf the juſtice to tell you, that my affections are naturally very fixed and conſtant; and if I had ever reaſon of complaint againſt you (of which by the bye I have not the leaſt ſhadow,) I am conſcious of ſo many defects in myſelf, as diſpoſe me to be not a little charitable and forgiving.

"It gives me the trueſt heart-felt ſatisfaction to hear you have a good kind huſband, and are in eaſy contented circumſtances; but were they otherwiſe, that would only awaken and heighten my tenderneſs towards you. As our good and tender-hearted parents did not live to receive any material teſtimonies of that higheſt human gratitude I owed them (than which nothing could have given me equal pleaſure,) the only return I can make them now is by kindneſs to thoſe they left behind them: would to God poor Lizy had lived longer, to have been a farther witneſs of the truth of what I ſay; and that I might have had the pleaſure of ſeeing once more a ſiſter, who ſo truly deſerved my eſteem and love. But ſhe is happy, while we muſt toil a little longer here below: let us however do it chearfully and gratefully, ſupported by the pleaſing hope of meeting yet again on a ſafer ſhore, where to recollect the ſtorms and difficulties of life will not perhaps be inconſiſtent with that bliſsful ſtate. You did right to call your daughter by her name; for you muſt needs have had a particular tender friendſhip for one another, endeared as you were by nature, by having paſſed the affectionate years of your youth together; and by that great ſoftner and engager of hearts, mutual hardſhip. That it was in my power to eaſe it a little, I account one of the moſt exquiſite pleaſures of my life.—But enough of this melancholy though not unpleaſing ſtrain.

"I eſteem you for your ſenſible and diſintereſted advice to Mr. Bell, as you will ſee by my Letter to him: as I approve entirely of his marrying again, you may readily aſk me why I don't marry at all. My circumſtances have hitherto been ſo variable and uncertain in this fluctuating world, as induce to keep me from engaging in ſuch a ſtate: and now, though they are more ſettled, and of late (which you will be glad to hear) conſiderably improved, I begin to think myſelf too far advanced in life for ſuch youthful

undertakings, not to mention ſome other petty reaſons that are apt to ſtartle the delicacy of difficult old batchelors. I am, however, not a little ſuſpicious that was I to pay a viſit to Scotland (which I have ſome thoughts of doing ſoon) I might poſſibly be tempted to think of a thing not eaſily repaired if done amiſs. I have always been of opinion that none make better wives than the ladies of Scotland; and yet, who more forſaken than they, while the gentlemen are continually running abroad all the world over? Some of them, it is true, are wiſe enough to return for a wife. You ſee I am beginning to make intereſt already with the Scots ladies.—But no more of this infectious ſubject——Pray let me hear from you now and then; and though I am not a regular correſpondent, yet perhaps I may mend in that reſpect. Remember me kindly to your huſband, and believe me to be,

Your moſt affectionate brother,

JAMES THOMSON."

(Addreſſed) "To Mrs. Thomſon in Larark."

The benevolence of Thomſon was fervid, but not active; he would give, on all occaſions, what aſſiſtance his purſe would ſupply; but the offices of intervention or ſolicitation he could not conquer his ſluggiſhneſs ſufficiently to perform. The affairs of others, however, were not more neglected than his own. He had often felt the inconveniences of idleneſs, but he never cured it; and was ſo conſcious of his own character, that he talked of writing an Eaſtern Tale of *the Man who loved to be in Diſtreſs.*

Among his peculiarities was a very unſkilful and inarticulate manner of pronouncing any lofty or ſolemn compoſition. He was once reading to Doddington, who, being himſelf a reader eminently elegant, was ſo much provoked by his odd utterance, that he ſnatched the paper from his hand, and told him that he did not underſtand his own verſes.

The biographer of Thomſon has remarked, that an author's life is beſt read in his works; his obſervation was not well-timed. Savage, who lived much with Thomſon, once told me, how he heard a lady remarking that ſhe could gather from his works three parts of his character, that he was a *great Lover*, *a great Swimmer*, and *rigorously abſtinent;* but, ſaid Savage, he knows not any love but that of

the ſex; he was perhaps never in cold water in his life; and he indulges himſelf in all the luxury that comes within his reach. Yet Savage always ſpoke with the moſt eager praiſe of his ſocial qualities, his warmth and conſtancy of friendſhip, and his adherence to his firſt acquaintance when the advancement of his reputation had left them behind him.

As a writer, he is entitled to one praiſe of the higheſt kind: his mode of thinking, and of expreſſing his thoughts, is original. His blank verſe is no more the blank verſe of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauſes, his diction, are of his own growth, without tranſcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on Nature and on Life, with the eye which Nature beſtows only on a poet; the eye that diſtinguiſhes, in every thing preſented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vaſt, and attends to the minute. The reader of the *Seasons* wonders that he never ſaw before what Thomſon ſhews him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomſon impreſſes.

His is one of the works in which blank verſe ſeems properly uſed; Thomſon's wide expanſion of general views, and his enumeration of circumſtantial varieties, would have been obſtructed and embarraſſed by the frequent interſection of the ſenſe, which are the neceſſary effects of rhyme.

His deſcriptions of extended ſcenes and general effects bring before us the whole magnificence of Nature, whether pleaſing or dreadful. The gaiety of *Spring*, the ſplendour of *Summer*, the tranquillity of *Autumn*, and the horror of *Winter*, take in their turns poſſeſſion of the mind. The poet leads us through the appearances of things as they are ſucceſſively varied by the viciſſitudes of the year, and imparts to us ſo much of his own enthuſiaſm, that our thoughts expand with his imagery, and kindle with his ſentiments. Nor is the naturaliſt without his part in entertainment; for he is aſſiſted to recollect and to combine, to arrange his diſcoveries, and to amplify the ſphere of his contemplation.

The great defect of the *Seasons* is want of method; but for this I know not that there was any remedy. Of many appearances ſubſiſting all at once, no rule can be given why one ſhould be mentioned before another; yet the me-

mory wants the help of order, and the curioſity is not excited by ſuſpence or expectation.

His diction is in the higheſt degree florid and luxuriant, ſuch as may be ſaid to be to his images and thoughts *both their luſtre and their ſhade;* ſuch as inveſt them with ſplendour, through which perhaps they are not always eaſily diſcerned. It is too exuberant, and ſometimes may be charged with filling the ear more than the mind.

Theſe Poems, with which I was acquainted at their firſt appearance, I have ſince found altered and enlarged by ſubſequent reviſals, as the author ſuppoſed his judgment to grow more exact, and as books or converſation extended his knowledge and opened his proſpects. They are, I think, improved in general; yet I know not whether they have not loſt part of what Temple calls their *race;* a word which, applied to wines, in its primitive ſenſe, means the flavour of the ſoil.

Liberty, when it firſt appeared, I tried to read, and ſoon deſiſted. I have never tried again, and therefore will not hazard either praiſe or cenſure.

The higheſt praiſe which he has received ought not to be ſuppreſt; it is ſaid by Lord Lyttelton in the Prologue to his poſthumous play, that his works contained

> No line which, dying, he could wiſh to blot.

WATTS.

THE Poems of Dr. WATTS were by my recommendation inſerted in the late Collection; the readers of which are to impute to me whatever pleaſure or wearineſs they may find in the peruſal of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden.

ISAAC WATTS was born July 17, 1674, at Southampton, where his father, of the ſame name, kept a boarding-ſchool for young gentlemen, though common report makes him a ſhoemaker. He appears, from the narrative of Dr. Gibbons, to have been neither indigent nor illiterate.

Iſaac, the eldeſt of nine children, was given to books from his infancy; and began, we are told, to learn Latin when he was four years old, I ſuppoſe, at home. He was afterwards taught Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, by Mr. Pinhorn, a clergyman, maſter of the Free ſchool at Southampton, to whom the gratitude of his ſcholar afterwards inſcribed a Latin ode.

His proficiency at ſchool was ſo conſpicuous, that a ſubſcription was propoſed for his ſupport at the Univerſity; but he declared his reſolution to take his lot with the Diſſenters. Such he was, as every Chriſtian Church would rejoice to have adopted.

He therefore repaired in 1690 to an academy taught by Mr. Rowe, where he had for his companions and fellow-ſtudents Mr. Hughes the poet, and Dr. Horte, afterwards Archbiſhop of Tuam. Some Latin Eſſays, ſuppoſed to have been written as exerciſes at this academy, ſhew a degree of knowledge, both philoſophical and theological, ſuch as very few attain to by a much longer courſe of ſtudy.

He was, as he hints in his Miſcellanies, a maker of verſes from fifteen to fifty, and in his youth he appears to have paid attention to Latin poetry. His verſes to his brother, in the *glyconic* meaſure, written when he was ſeventeen, are remarkably eaſy and elegant. Some of his other odes are deformed by the Pindaric folly then prevailing, and are

written with ſuch neglect of all metrical rules as is without example among the ancients; but his diction, though perhaps not always exactly pure, has ſuch copiouſneſs and ſplendour, as ſhews that he was but a very little diſtance from excellence.

His method of ſtudy was to impreſs the contents of his books upon his memory by abridging them, and by interleaving them to amplify one ſyſtem with ſuppliments from another.

With the congregation of his tutor Mr. Rowe, who were, I believe, Independents, he communicated in his nineteenth year.

At the age of twenty he left the academy, and ſpent two years in ſtudy and devotion at the houſe of his father, who treated him with great tenderneſs; and had the happineſs, indulged to few parents, of living to ſee his ſon eminent for literature and venerable for piety.

He was then entertained by Sir John Hartopp five years, as domeſtic tutor to his ſon; and in that time particularly devoted himſelf to the ſtudy of the Holy Scriptures; and being choſen aſſiſtant to Dr. Chauncey, preached the firſt time on the birth-day that completed his twenty-fourth year; probably conſidering that as the day of a ſecond nativity, by which he entered on a new period of exiſtence.

In about three years he ſucceeded Dr. Chauncey; but, ſoon after his entrance on his charge, he was ſeized by a dangerous illneſs, which ſunk him to ſuch weakneſs, that the congregation thought an aſſiſtant neceſſary, and appointed Mr. Price. His health then returned gradually, and he performed his duty, till (1712) he was ſeized by a fever of ſuch violence and continuance, that, from the feebleneſs which it brought upon him, he never perfectly recovered.

This calamitous ſtate made the compaſſion of his friends neceſſary, and drew upon him the attention of Sir Thomas Abney, who received him into his houſe; where, with a conſtancy of friendſhip and uniformity of conduct not often to be found, he was treated for thirty-ſix years with all the kindneſs that friendſhip could prompt, and all the attention that reſpect could dictate. Sir Thomas died about eight years afterwards; but he continued with the lady and her daughters to the end of his life. The lady died about a year after him.

A coalition like this, a ſtate in which the notions of patronage and dependence were overpowered by the perception

of reciprocal benefits, deſerves a particular memorial; and I will not withhold from the reader Dr. Gibbons's repreſentation, to which regard is to be paid as to the narrative of one who writes what he knows, and what is known likewiſe to multitudes beſides.

"Our next obſervation ſhall be made upon that remarkably kind Providence which brought the Doctor into Sir Thomas Abney's family, and continued him there till his death, a period of no leſs than thirty-ſix years. In the midſt of his ſacred labours for the glory of God, and good of his generation, he is ſeized with a moſt violent and threatening fever, which leaves him oppreſſed with great weakneſs, and puts a ſtop at leaſt to his public ſervices for four years. In this diſtreſſing ſeaſon, doubly ſo to his active and pious ſpirit, he is invited to Sir Thomas Abney's family, nor ever removes from it till he had finiſhed his days. Here he enjoyed the uninterrupted demonſtrations of the trueſt friendſhip. Here, without any care of his own, he had every thing which could contribute to the enjoyment of life, and favour the unwearied purſuits of his ſtudies. Here he dwelt in a family, which, for piety, order, harmony, and every virtue, was an houſe of God. Here he had the privilege of a country receſs, the fragrant bower, the ſpreading lawn, the flowery garden, and other advantages, to ſooth his mind and aid his reſtoration to health; to yield him, whenever he choſe them, moſt grateful intervals from his laborious ſtudies, and enable him to return to them with redoubled vigour and delight. Had it not been for this moſt happy event, he might, as to outward view, have feebly, it may be painfully, dragged on through many more years of langour, and inability for public ſervice, and even for profitable ſtudy, or perhaps might have ſunk into his grave under the overwhelming load of infirmities in the midſt of his days; and thus the church and world would have been deprived of thoſe many excellent ſermons and works, which he drew up and publiſhed during his long reſidence in this family. In a few years after his coming hither, Sir Thomas Abney dies; but his amiable conſort ſurvives, who ſhews the Doctor the ſame reſpect and friendſhip as before, and moſt happily for him and great numbers beſides for, as her riches were great, her generoſity and munificence were in full proportion; her thread of life was drawn out to a great age, even beyond that of the Doctor's; and thus this ex-

cellent man, through her kindneſs, and that of her daughter, the preſent Mrs. Elizabeth Abney, who in a like degree eſteemed and honoured him, enjoyed all the benefits and felicities he experienced at his firſt entrance into this family, till his days were numbered and finiſhed, and, like a ſhock of corn in its ſeaſon, he aſcended into the regions of perfect and immortal life and joy."

If this quotation has appeared long, let it be conſidered that it compriſes an account of ſix-and-thirty years, and thoſe the years of Dr. Watts.

From the time of his reception into this family, his life was no otherwiſe diverſified than by ſucceſſive publications. The ſeries of his works I am not able to deduce; their number, and their variety, ſhew the intenſeneſs of his induſtry, and the extent of his capacity.

He was one of the firſt authors that taught the Diſſenters to court attention by the graces of language. Whatever they had among them before, whether of learning or acuteneſs, was commonly obſcured and blunted by coarſeneſs and inelegance of ſtyle. He ſhewed them, that zeal and purity might be expreſſed and enforced by poliſhed diction.

He continued to the end of his life the teacher of a congregation, and no reader of his works can doubt his fidelity or diligence. In the pulpit, though his low ſtature, which very little exceeded five feet, graced him with no advantages of appearance, yet the gravity and propriety of his utterance made his diſcourſes very efficacious. I once mentioned the reputation which Mr. Foſter had gained by his proper delivery to my friend Dr. Hawkeſworth, who told me, that in the art of pronunciation he was far inferior to Dr. Watts.

Such was his flow of thoughts, and ſuch his promptitude of language, that in the latter part of his life he did not pre-compoſe his curſory ſermons; but having adjuſted the heads, and ſketched out ſome particulars, truſted for ſucceſs to his extemporary powers.

He did not endeavour to aſſiſt his eloquence by any geſticulations; for, as no corporeal actions have any correſpondence with theological truth, he did not ſee how they could enforce it.

At the concluſion of weighty ſentences he gave time, by a ſhort pauſe, for the proper impreſſion.

To ſtated and public inſtruction he added familiar viſits and perſonal application, and was careful to improve the opportunities which converſation offered of diffuſing and increaſing the influence of religion.

By his natural temper he was quick of reſentment; but, by his eſtabliſhed and habitual practice, he was gentle, modeſt, and inoffenſive. His tenderneſs appeared in his attention to children, and to the poor. To the poor, while he lived in the family of his friend, he allowed the third part of his annual revenue, though the whole was not a hundred a year; and for children, he condeſcended to lay aſide the ſcholar, the philoſopher, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion, and ſyſtems of inſtruction, adapted to their wants and capacities, from the dawn of reaſon through its gradations of advance in the morning of life. Every man, acquainted with the common principles of human action, will look with veneration on the writer who is at one time combating Locke, and at another making a catechiſm for children in their fourth year. A voluntary deſcent from the dignity of ſcience is perhaps the hardeſt leſſon that humility can teach.

As his mind was capacious, his curioſity excurſive, and his induſtry continual, his writings are very numerous, and his ſubjects various. With his theological works I am only enough acquainted to admire his meekneſs of oppoſition, and his mildneſs of cenſure. It was not only in his book but in his mind that *orthodoxy* was *united* with *charity*.

Of his philoſophical pieces, his Logic has been received into the univerſities, and therefore wants no private recommendation: if he owes part of it to Le Clerc, it muſt be conſidered that no man who undertakes merely to methodiſe or illuſtrate a ſyſtem, pretends to be its author.

In his metaphyſical diſquiſitions, it was obſerved by the late learned Mr. Dyer, that he confounded the idea of *ſpace* with that of *empty ſpace*, and did not conſider that though ſpace might be without matter, yet matter being extended, could not be without ſpace.

Few books have been peruſed by me with greater pleaſure than his *Improvement of the Mind*, of which the radical principles may indeed be found in Locke's *Conduct of the Underſtanding*, but they are ſo expanded and ramified by Watts, as to confer upon him the merit of a work in the higheſt degree uſeful and pleaſing. Whoever has the care

of inſtructing others, may be charged with deficience in his duty if this book is not recommended.

I have mentioned his treatiſes of Theology as diſtinct from his other productions; but the truth is, that whatever he took in hand was, by his inceſſant ſolicitude for ſouls, converted to Theology. As piety predominated in his mind, it is diffuſed over his works: under his direction it may be truly ſaid, *Theologiæ Philoſophia ancillatur*, philoſophy is ſubſervient to evangelical inſtruction; it is difficult to read a page without learning, or at leaſt wiſhing, to be better. The attention is caught by indirect inſtruction, and he that ſat down only to reaſon is on a ſudden compelled to pray.

It was therefore with great propriety that, in 1728, he received from Edinburgh and Aberdeen an unſolicited diploma, by which he became a Doctor of Divinity. Academical honours would have more value, if they were always beſtowed with equal judgment.

He continued many years to ſtudy and to preach, and to do good by his inſtruction and example; till at laſt the infirmities of age diſabled him from the more laborious part of his miniſteral functions, and, being no longer capable of public duty, he offered to remit the ſalary appendant to it; but his congregation would not accept the reſignation.

By degrees his weakneſs increaſed, and at laſt confined him to his chamber and his bed; where he was worn gradually away without pain, till he expired Nov. 25, 1748, in the ſeventy-fifth year of his age.

Few men have left behind ſuch purity of character, or ſuch monuments of laborious piety. He has provided inſtruction for all ages, from thoſe who are liſping their firſt leſſons, to the enlightened readers of Malbranche and Locke; he has left neither corporeal nor ſpiritual nature unexamined; he has taught the art of reaſoning, and the ſcience of the ſtars.

His character, therefore, muſt be formed from the multiplicity and diverſity of his attainments, rather than from any ſingle performance; for it would not be ſafe to claim for him the higheſt rank in any ſingle denomination of literary dignity; yet perhaps there was nothing in which he would not have excelled, if he had not divided his powers to different purſuits.

As a poet, had he been only a poet, he would probably have ſtood high among the authors with whom he is now aſſociated. For his judgment was exact, and he noted beauties and faults with very nice diſcernment; his imagination, as the *Dacian Battle* proves, was vigorous and active, and the ſtores of knowledge were large by which his fancy was to be ſupplied. His ear was well tuned, and his diction was elegant and copious. But his devotional poetry is, like that of others, unſatisfactory. The paucity of its topics enforces perpetual reputation, and the ſanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of figurative diction. It is ſufficient for Watts to have done better than others what no man has done well.

His poems on other ſubjects ſeldom riſe higher than might be expected from the amuſements of a Man of Letters, and have different degrees of value as they are more or leſs laboured, or as the occaſion was more or leſs favourable to invention.

He writes too often without regular meaſures, and too often in blank verſe; the rhymes are not always ſufficiently correſpondent. He is particularly unhappy in coining names expreſſive of characters. His lines are commonly ſmooth and eaſy, and his thoughts always religiouſly pure; but who is there that, to ſo much piety and innocence, does not wiſh for a greater meaſure of ſpritelineſs and vigour? He is at leaſt one of the few poets with whom youth and ignorance may be ſafely pleaſed; and happy will be that reader whoſe mind is diſpoſed by his verſes, or his proſe, to imitate him in all but his non-conformity, to copy his benevolence to man, and his reverence to God.

A. PHILIPS.

OF the birth or early part of the life of AMBROSE PHILIPS I have not been able to find any account. His academical education he received at St. John's College in Cambridge, where he firſt ſolicited the notice of the world by ſome Engliſh verſes, in the Collection publiſhed by the Univerſity on the death of queen Mary.

From this time how he was employed, or in what ſtation he paſſed his life, is not yet diſcovered. He muſt have publiſhed his Paſtorals before the year 1708, becauſe they are evidently prior to thoſe of Pope.

He afterwards (1709) addreſſed to the univerſal patron, the duke of Dorſet, a *poetical Letter from Copenhagen*, which was publiſhed in the *Tatler*, and is by Pope in one of his firſt Letters mentioned with high praiſe, as the production of a man *who could write very nobly*.

Philips was a zealous Whig, and therefore eaſily found acceſs to Addiſon and Steele; but his ardour ſeems not to have procured him any thing more than kind words; ſince he was reduced to tranſlate the *Perſian Tales* for Tonſon, for which he was afterwards reproached, with this addition of contempt, that he worked for half a crown. The book is divided into many ſections, for each of which if he received half a crown, his reward, as writers then were paid, was very liberal; but half a crown had a mean ſound.

He was employed in promoting the principles of his party, by epitomiſing Hacket's *Life of Archbiſhop Williams*. The original book is written with ſuch depravity of genius, ſuch mixture of the fop and pedant, as has not often appeared. The Epitome is free enough from affectation, but has little ſpirit or vigour.

In 1712 he brought upon the ſtage *The Diſtreſt Mother*, almoſt a tranſlation of Racine's *Andromaque*. Such a work requires no uncommon powers; but the friends of Philips exerted every art to promote his intereſt. Before the ap-

pearance of the play a whole *Spectator*, none indeed of the beſt, was devoted to its praiſe; while it yet continued to be acted, another *Spectator* was written, to tell what impreſſion it made upon Sir Roger; and on the firſt night a ſelect audience, ſays Pope*, was called together to applaud it.

It was concluded with the moſt ſucceſsful Epiloge that was ever yet ſpoken on the Engliſh theatre. The three firſt nights it was recited twice; and not only continued to be demanded through the run, as it is termed, of the play, but whenever it is recalled to the ſtage, where by peculir fortune, though a copy from the French, it yet keeps its place, the Epilogue is ſtill expected, and is ſtill ſpoken.

The propriety of epilogues in general, and conſequently of this, was queſtioned by a correſpondent of the *Spectator*, whoſe Letter was undoubtedly admitted for the ſake of the Anſwer, which ſoon followed, written with much zeal and acrimony. The attack and the defence equally contributed to ſtimulate curioſity and continue attention. It may be diſcovered in the defence, that Prior's Epilogue to *Phædra* had a little excited jealouſy; and ſomething of Prior's plan may be diſcovered in the performance of his rival.

Of this diſtinguiſhed Epilogue the reputed author was the wretched Budgel, whom Addiſon uſed to denominate* *the man who calls me cousin:* and when he was aſked how ſuch a ſilly fellow could write ſo well, replied, *The Epilogue was quite another thing when I saw it first.* It was known in Tonſon's family, and told to Garrick, that Addiſon was himſelf the author of it, and that when it had been at firſt printed with his name, he came early in the morning, before the copies were diſtributed, and ordered it to be given to Budgel, that it might add weight to the ſolicitation which he was then making for a place.

Philips was now high in the ranks of literature. His play was applauded; his tranſlations from Sappho had been publiſhed in the *Spectator;* he was an important and diſtinguiſhed aſſociate of clubs witty and political; and nothing was wanting to his happineſs, but that he ſhould be ſure of its continuance.

The work which had procured him the firſt notice from the public was his ſix Paſtorals which, flattering the imagination with Arcadian ſcenes, probably found many rea-

* *Spence.*

ders, and might have long paſſed as a pleaſing amuſement, had they not been unhappily too much commended.

The ruſtic Poems of Theocritus were ſo highly valued by the Greeks and Romans, that they attracted the imitation of Virgil, whoſe Eclogues ſeem to have been conſidered as precluding all attempts of the ſame kind; for no ſhepherds were taught to ſing by any ſucceeding poet, till Nemeſian and Calphurnius ventured their feeble efforts in the lower age of Latin literature.

At the revival of learning in Italy, it was ſoon diſcovered that a dialogue of imaginary ſwains might be compoſed with little difficulty; becauſe the converſation of ſhepherds excludes profound or refined ſentiment; and, for images and deſcriptions, Satyrs and Fauns, and Naiads and Dryads, were always within call; and woods and meadows, and hills and rivers, ſupplied variety of matter; which, having a natural power to ſooth the mind, did not quickly cloy it.

Petrarch entertained the learned men of his age with the novelty of modern Paſtorals in Latin. Being not ignorant of Greek, and finding nothing in the word *Eclogue* of rural meaning, he ſuppoſed it to be corrupted by the copiers, and therefore called his own productions *Æglogues*, by which he meant to expreſs the talk of goatherds, though it will mean only the talk of goats. This new name was adopted by ſubſequent writers, and amongſt others by our Spenſer.

More than a century afterwards (1498), Mantuan publiſhed his *Bucolicks* with ſuch ſucceſs, that they were ſoon dignified by Badius with a comment, and, as Scaliger complained, received into ſchools, and taught as claſſical; his complaint was vain, and the practice, however injudicious, ſpread far and continued long. Mantuan was read, at leaſt in ſome of the inferior ſchools of this kingdom, to the beginning of the preſent century. The ſpeakers of Mantuan carried their diſquiſitions beyond the country, to cenſure the corruptions of the Church; and from him Spenſer learned to employ his ſwains on topics of controverſy.

The Italians ſoon transferred Paſtoral Poetry into their own language: Sannazaro wrote *Arcadia* in proſe and verſe; Taſſo and Guarini wrote *Favole Boſcharecccie*, or Sylvan Dramas; and all nations of Europe filled volumes with *Thyrsis* and *Damon*, and *Theſtylis* and *Phyllis*.

Philips thinks it "ſomewhat ſtrange to conceive how, in an age ſo addicted to the Muſes, Paſtoral Poetry never comes to be ſo much as thought upon." His wonder ſeems very unſeaſonable; there had never, from the time of Spenſer, wanted writers to talk occaſionally of *Arcadia* and *Strephon;* and half the book, in which he firſt tried his powers, conſiſts of Dialogues on queen Mary's death, between *Tityrus* and *Corydon*, or *Mopsus* and *Menalcas*. A ſeries or book of Paſtorals, however, I know not that any one had then lately publiſhed.

Not long afterwards Pope made the firſt diſplay of his powers in four Paſtorals, written in a very different form. Philips had taken Spenſer, and Pope took Virgil for his pattern. Philips endeavoured to be natural, Pope laboured to be elegant.

Philips was now favoured by Addiſon, and by Addiſon's companions, who were very willing to puſh him into reputation. The *Guardian* gave an account of Paſtoral, partly critical, and partly hiſtorical; in which, when the merit of the moderns is compared, Taſſo and Guarini are cenſured for remote thoughts and unnatural refinements; and, upon the whole, the Italians and French are all excluded from rural poetry, and the pipe of the Paſtoral Muſe is tranſmitted by lawful inheritance from Theocritus to Virgil, from Virgil to Spenſer, and from Spenſer to Philips.

With this inauguration of Philips, his rival Pope was not much delighted; he therefore drew a compariſon of Philips's performance with his own, in which, with an unexampled and unequalled artifice of irony, though he has himſelf always the advantage, he gives the preference to Philips. The deſign of aggrandiſing himſelf he diſguiſed with ſuch dexterity, that, though Addiſon diſcovered it, Steele was decided, and was afraid of diſpleaſing Pope by publiſhing his paper. Publiſhed however it was (*Guard.* 40), and from that time Pope and Philips lived in a perpetual reciprocation of malevolence.

In poetical powers, of either praiſe or ſatire, there was no proportion between the combatants; but Philips, though he could not prevail by wit, hoped to hurt Pope with another weapon, and charged him, as Pope thought, with Addiſon's approbation, as diſaffected to the government.

Even with this he was not ſatiſfied; for, indeed, there is no appearance that any regard was paid to his clamours.

He proceeded to groſſer inſults, and hung up a rod at Button's, with which he threatened to chaſtiſe Pope, who appears to have been extremely exaſperated; for in the firſt edition of his Letters he calls Philips *rascal*, and in the laſt ſtill charges him with detaining in his hands the ſubſcriptions for Homer delivered to him by the Hanover Club.

I ſuppoſe it was never ſuſpected that he meant to appropriate the money; he only delayed, and with ſufficient meanneſs, the gratification of him by whoſe proſperity he was pained.

Men ſometimes ſuffer by injudicious kindneſs; Philips became ridiculous, without his own fault, by the abſurd admiration of his friends, who decorated him with honorary garlands which the firſt breath of contradiction blaſted.

When upon the ſucceſſion of the Houſe of Hanover every Whig expected to be happy, Philips ſeems to have obtained too little notice; he caught few drops of the golden ſhower, though he did not omit what flattery could perform. He was only made a Commiſſioner of the Lottery, (1717), and, what did not much elevate his character, a Juſtice of the Peace.

The ſucceſs of his firſt play muſt naturally diſpoſe him to turn his hopes towards the ſtage: he did not however ſoon commit himſelf to the mercy of an audience, but contented himſelf with the fame already acquired, till after nine years he produced (1721) *The Briton*, a tragedy which, whatever was its reception, is now neglected; though one of the ſcenes, between *Vanoc* the Britiſh Prince and *Valens* the Roman General, is confeſſed to be written with great dramatic ſkill, animated by ſpirit truly poetical.

He had not been idle though he had been ſilent; for he exhibited another tragedy the ſame year, on the ſtory of *Humphry Duke of Gloucester*. This tragedy is only remembered by its title.

His happieſt undertaking was of a paper called *The Freethinker*, in conjunction with aſſociates, of whom one was Dr. Boulter, who, then only miniſter of a pariſh in Southwark, was of ſo much conſequence to the government, that he was made firſt biſhop of Briſtol, and afterwards primate of Ireland, where his piety and his charity will be long honoured.

It may eaſily be imagined that what was printed under the direction of Boulter, would have nothing in it indecent

or licentious; its title is to be underſtood as implying only freedom from unreaſonable prejudice. It has been reprinted in volumes, but is little read; nor can impartial criticiſm recommend it as worthy of revival.

Boulter was not well qualified to write diurnal eſſays; but he knew how to practiſe the liberality of greatneſs and the fidelity of friendſhip. When he was advanced to the height of eccleſiaſtical dignity, he did not forget the companion of his labours. Knowing Philips to be ſlenderly ſupported, he took him to Ireland, as partaker of his fortune; and, making him his ſecretary, added ſuch preferments, as enabled him to repreſent the county of Armagh in the Iriſh Parliament.

In December 1726 he was made ſecretary to the Lord Chancellor; and in Auguſt 1733 became judge of the Prerogative Court.

After the death of his patron he continued ſome years in Ireland; but at laſt longing, as it ſeems, for his native country, he returned (1748) to London, having doubtleſs ſurvived moſt of his friends and enemies, and among them his dreadful antagoniſt Pope. He found however the duke of Newcaſtle ſtill living, and to him he dedicated his poems collected into a volume.

Having purchaſed an annuity of four hundred pounds, he now certainly hoped to paſs ſome years of life in plenty and tranquillity; but his hope deceived him: he was ſtruck with a palſy, and died June 18, 1749, in his ſeventy-eighth year.

Of his perſonal character all that I have heard is, that he was eminent for bravery and ſkill in the ſword, and that in converſation he was ſolemn and pompous. He had great ſenſibility of cenſure, if judgment may be made by a ſingle ſtory which I heard long ago from Mr. Ing, a gentleman of great eminence in Staffordſhire. "Philips," ſays he, "was once at table, when I aſked him, How came thy king of Epirus to drive oxen, and to ſay *I'm goaded on by love?* After which queſtion he never ſpoke again."

Of the *Diſtreſt Mother* not much is pretended to be his own, and therefore it is no ſubject of criticiſm: his other two tragedies, I believe, are not below mediocrity, nor above it. Among the Poems compriſed in the late collection, the *Letter from Denmark* may be juſtly praiſed; the Paſtorals, which by the writer of the *Guardian* were ranked as one of the four genuine productions of the ruſtic

Muſe, cannot ſurely be deſpicable. That they exhibit a mode of life which does not exiſt, nor ever exiſted, is not to be objected; the ſuppoſition of ſuch a ſtate is allowed to Paſtoral. In his other poems he cannot be denied the praiſe of lines ſometimes elegant; but he has ſeldom much force, or much comprehenſion. The pieces that pleaſe beſt are thoſe which, from Pope and Pope's adherents, procured him the name of *Namby Pamby*, the poems of ſhort lines, by which he paid his court to all ages and characters, from Walpole the *steerer of the realm*, to Miſs Pulteney in the nurſery. The numbers are ſmooth and ſpritely, and the diction is ſeldom faulty. They are not loaded with much thought, yet if they had been written by Addiſon they would have had admirers: little things are not valued but when they are done by thoſe who cannot do greater.

In his tranſlations from Pindar he found the art of reaching all the obſcurity of the Theban bard, however he may fall below his ſublimity; he will be allowed, if he has leſs fire, to have more ſmoke.

He has added nothing to Engliſh poetry, yet at leaſt half his book deſerves to be read: perhaps he valued moſt himſelf that part, which the critic would reject.

WEST.

GILBERT WEST is one of the writers of whom I regret my inability to give a ſufficient account; the intelligence which my enquiries have obtained is general and ſcanty.

He was the ſon of the reverend Dr. Weſt; perhaps him who publiſhed *Pindar* at Oxford about the beginning of this century. His mother was ſiſter to Sir Richard Temple, afterwards lord Cobham. His father, purpoſing to educate him for the Church, ſent him firſt to Eton, and afterwards to Oxford; but he was ſeduced to a more airy mode of life; by a commiſſion in a troop of horſe procured him by his uncle.

He continued ſome time in the army; though it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that he never ſunk into a mere ſoldier, nor ever loſt the love or much neglected the purſuit of learning; and afterwards, finding himſelf more inclined to civil employment, he laid down his commiſſion, and engaged in buſineſs under the lord Townſhend, then ſecretary of ſtate, with whom he attended the king to Hanover.

His adherence to lord Townſhend ended in nothing but a nomination (May 1729) to be clerk extraordinary of the Privy Council, which produced no immediate profit; for it only placed him in a ſtate of expectation and right of ſucceſſion, and it was very long before a vacancy admitted him to profit.

Soon afterwards he married, and ſettled himſelf in a very pleaſant houſe at Wickham in Kent, where he devoted himſelf to learning, and to piety. Of his learning the late Collection exhibits evidence, which would have been yet fuller if the diſſertations which accompany his verſion of Pindar had not been improperly omitted. Of his piety the influence has, I hope, been extended far by his *Obſervations on the Reſurrection*, publiſhed in 1747, for which the Univerſity of Oxford created him a Doctor of Laws by diploma (March 30, 1748), and would doubtleſs have

reached yet further had he lived to complete what he had for ſome time meditated, the Evidences of the Truth of the New Teſtament. Perhaps it may not be without effect to tell, that he read the prayers of the public liturgy every morning to his family, and that on Sunday evening he called his ſervants into the parlour, and read to them firſt a ſermon, and then prayers. Craſhaw is now not the only maker of verſes to whom may be given the two venerable names of *Poet and Saint.*

He was very often viſited by Lyttleton and Pitt, who, when they were weary of faction and debates, uſed at Wickham to find books and quiet, a decent table, and literary converſation. There is at Wickham a walk made by Pitt; and, what is of far more importance, at Wickham Lyttelton received that conviction which produced his *Diſſertation on St. Paul.*

Theſe two illuſtrious friends had for a while liſtened to the blandiſhments of infidelity, and when Weſt's book was publiſhed, it was bought by ſome who did not know his change of opinion, in expectation of new objections againſt Chriſtianity; and as Infidels do not want malignity, they revenged the diſappointment by calling him a Methodiſt.

Mr. Weſt's income was not large; and his friends endeavoured, but without ſucceſs, to obtain an augmentation. It is reported, that the education of the young prince was offered to him, but that he required a more extenſive power of ſuperintendence than it was thought proper to allow him.

In time, however, his revenue was improved; he lived to have one of the lucrative clerkſhips of the Privy Council (1752), and Mr. Pitt at laſt had it in his power to make him treaſurer of Chelſea Hoſpital.

He was now ſufficiently rich; but wealth came too late to be long enjoyed: nor could it ſecure him from the calamities of life; he loſt (1755) his only ſon; and the year after (March 26), a ſtroke of the palſy brought to the grave one of the few poets to whom the grave might be without its terrors.

Of his tranſlations I have only compared the firſt Olympic Ode with the original, and found my expectation ſurpaſſed, both by its elegance and its exactneſs. He does not confine himſelf to his author's train of ſtanzas; for he ſaw that the difference of the languages required a different mode of verſification. The firſt ſtrophe is eminently hap-

py; in the ſecond he has a little ſtrayed from Pindar's meaning, who ſays, *If thou, my ſoul, wiſhest to ſpeak of games, look not in the deſert ſky for a planet hotter than the ſun, nor ſhall we tell of nobler games than thoſe of Olympia.* He is ſometimes too paraphraſtical. Pindar beſtows upon Hiero an epithet, which in one word, ſignifies *delighting in horſes;* a word which, in the tranſlation, generates theſe lines;

> Hiero's royal brows, whoſe care
> Tends the courſer's noble breed,
> Pleas'd to nurſe the pregnant mare,
> Pleas'd to train the youthful ſteed.

Pindar ſays of Pelops, that *he came alone in the dark to the White Sea*; and Weſt,

> Near the billow-beaten ſide
> Of the foam-beſilver'd main,
> Darkling, and alone, he ſtood;

Which however is leſs exuberant than the former paſſage.

A work of this kind muſt, in a minute examination, diſcover many imperfections; but Weſt's verſion, ſo far as I have conſidered it, appears to be the product of great labour and great abilities.

His *Inſtitution of the Garter* (1742,) is written with ſufficient knowledge of the manners that prevailed in the age to which it is referred, and with great elegance of diction; but, for want of a proceſs of events, neither knowledge nor elegance preſerve the reader from wearineſs.

His *Imitations of Spenſer* are very ſucceſsfully performed, both with reſpect to the metre, the language and the fiction; and being engaged at once by the excellence of the ſentiments, and the artifice of the copy, the mind has two amuſements together. But ſuch compoſitions are not to be reckoned among the great atchievements of intellect, becauſe their effect is local and temporary; they appeal not to reaſon or paſſion, but to memory, and preſuppoſe an accidental or artificial ſtate of mind. An Imitation of Spenſer is nothing to a reader, however acute, by whom Spenſer has never been peruſed. Works of this kind may deſerve praiſe, as proofs of great induſtry, and great nicety of obſervation; but the higheſt praiſe, the praiſe of genius, they cannot claim. The nobleſt beauties of art are thoſe of which the effect is co-extended with rational nature, or

at leaſt with the whole circle of poliſhed life; what is leſs than this can be only pretty, the play-thing of faſhion, and the amuſement of a day.

THERE is in the *Adventurer* a paper of verſes given to one of the authors as Mr. Weſt's, and ſuppoſed to have been written by him. It ſhould not be concealed, however, that it is printed with Mr. Jago's name in Dodſley's Collection, and is mentioned as his in a Letter of Shenſtone's. Perhaps Weſt gave it without naming the author; and Hawkeſworth, receiving it from him, thought it his; for his he thought it, as he told me, and as he tells the public.

COLLINS.

WILLIAM COLLINS was born at Chicheſter on the twenty-fifth of December, about 1720. His father was a hatter, of good reputation. He was in 1733, as Dr. Warton has kindly informed me, admitted ſcholar of Wincheſter College, where he was educated by Dr. Burton. His Engliſh exerciſes were better than his Latin.

He firſt courted the notice of the public by ſome verſes to a *Lady weeping*, publiſhed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*.

In 1740, he ſtood firſt in the liſt of the ſcholars to be received in ſucceſſion at New College; but unhappily there was no vacancy. This was the original misfortune of his life. He became a Commoner of Queen's College, probably with a ſcanty maintenance; but was in about half a year elected a *Demy* of Magdalen College, where he continued till he had taken a Bachelor's degree, and then ſuddenly left the Univerſity; for what reaſon I know not that he told.

He now (about 1744) came to London a literary adventurer, with many projects in his head, and very little money in his pocket. He deſigned many works; but his great fault was irreſolution, or the frequent calls of immediate neceſſity broke his ſchemes, and ſuffered him to purſue no ſettled purpoſe. A man, doubtful of his dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is not much diſpoſed to abſtracted meditation, or remote enquiries. He publiſhed propoſals for a Hiſtory of the Revival of Learning; and I have heard him ſpeak with great kindneſs of Leo the Tenth, and with keen reſentment of his taſteleſs ſucceſſor. But probably not a page of the Hiſtory was ever written. He planned ſeveral tragedies, but he only planned them. He wrote now-and-then odes and other poems, and did ſomething, however little.

About this time I fell into his company. His appearance, was decent and manly; his knowledge conſiderable, his views extenſive, his converſation elegant, and his diſ-

poſition chearful. By degrees I gained his confidence; and one day was admitted to him when he was immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the ſtreet. On this occaſion recourſe was had to the bookſellers, who, on the credit of a tranſlation of Ariſtotle's Poetics, which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced as much money as enabled him to eſcape into the country. He ſhewed me the guineas ſafe in his hand. Soon afterwards his uncle, Mr. Martin, a lieutenant-colonel, left him about two thouſand pounds; a ſum which Collins could ſcarcely think exhauſtible, and which he did not live to exhauſt. The guineas were then repaid, and the tranſlation neglected.

But man is not born for happineſs; Collins, who, while he *studied to live*, felt no evil but poverty, no ſooner *lived to study* than his life was aſſailed by more dreadful calamities, diſeaſe and inſanity.

Having formerly written his character, while perhaps it was yet more diſtinctly impreſſed upon my memory, I ſhall inſert it here.

"Mr. Collins was a man of extenſive literature, and of vigorous faculties. He was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spaniſh languages. He had employed his mind chiefly upon works of fiction, and ſubjects of fancy; and, by indulging ſome peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with thoſe flights of imagination which paſs the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a paſſive acquieſcence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monſters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of inchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repoſe by the water falls of Elyſian gardens.

"This was however the character rather of his inclination than his genius; the grandeur of wildneſs, and the novelty of extravagance, were always deſired by him, but were not always attained. Yet as diligence is never wholly loſt; if his efforts ſometimes cauſed harſhneſs and obſcurity, they likewiſe produced in happier moments ſublimity and ſplendour. This idea which he had formed of excellence, led him to oriental fictions and allegorical imagery; and perhaps, while he was intent upon deſcription, he did not ſufficiently cultivate ſentiment. His poems are the productions of a mind not deficient in fire, nor unfurniſhed

with knowledge either of books or life, but ſomewhat obſtructed in its progreſs by deviation in queſt of miſtaken beauties.

" His morals were pure, and his opinions pious; in a long continuance of poverty, and long habits of diſſipation, it cannot be expected that any character ſhould be exactly uniform. There is a degree of want by which the freedom of agency is almoſt deſtroyed; and long aſſociation with fortuitous companions well at laſt relax the ſtrictneſs of truth, and abate the fervour of ſincerity. That this man, wiſe and virtuous as he was, paſſed always unentangled through the ſnares of life, it would be prejudice and temerity to affirm; but it may be ſaid that at leaſt he preſerved the ſource of action unpolluted; that his principles were never ſhaken, that his diſtinctions of right and wrong were never confounded, and that his faults had nothing of malignity or deſign, but proceeded from ſome unexpected preſſure, or caſual temptation.

" The latter part of his life cannot be remembered but with pity and ſadneſs. He languiſhed ſome years under that depreſſion of mind which enchains the faculties without deſtroying them, and leaves reaſon the knowledge of right without the power of purſuing it. Theſe clouds which he perceived gathering on his intellects, he endeavoured to diſperſe by travel, and paſſed into France; but found himſelf conſtrained to yield to his malady, and returned. He was for ſome time confined in a houſe of lunatics, and afterwards retired to the care of his ſiſter in Chicheſter, where death in 1756 came to his relief.

" After his return from France, the writer of this character paid him a viſit at Iſlington, where he was waiting for his ſiſter, whom he had directed to meet him: there was then nothing of diſorder diſcernable in his mind by any but himſelf; but he had withdrawn from ſtudy, and travelled with no other book than an Engliſh Teſtament, ſuch as children carry to the ſchool: when his friend took it into his hand, out of curioſity to ſee what companion a Man of Letters had choſen, *I have but one book*, ſaid Collins, *but that is the beſt.*"

Such was the fate of Collins, with whom I once delighted to converſe, and whom I yet remember with tenderneſs.

He was viſited at Chicheſter, in his laſt illneſs, by his learned friends Dr. Warton and his brother; to whom he ſpoke with diſapprobation of his Oriental Eclogues, as not

ſufficiently expreſſive of Aſiatic manners, and called them his Iriſh Eclogues. He ſhewed them, at the ſame time, an ode inſcribed to Mr. John Hume, on the ſuperſtitions of the Highlands; which they thought ſuperior to his other works, but which no ſearch has yet found.

His diſorder was not alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleneſs, a deficiency rather of his vital than intellectual powers. What he ſpoke wanted neither judgment nor ſpirit; but a few minutes exhauſted him, ſo that he was forced to reſt upon the couch, till a ſhort ceſſation reſtored his powers, and he was again able to talk with his former vigour.

The approaches of this dreadful malady he began to feel ſoon after his uncle's death; and, with the uſual weakneſs of men ſo diſeaſed, eagerly ſnatched that temporary relief with which the table and the bottle flatter and ſeduce. But his health continually declined, and he grew more and more burthenſome to himſelf.

To what I have formerly ſaid of his writings may be added, that his diction was often harſh, unſkilfully laboured, and injudiciouſly ſelected. He affected the obſolete when it was not worthy of revival; and he puts his words out of the common order, ſeeming to think, with ſome later candidates for fame, that not to write proſe is certainly to write poetry. His lines commonly are of ſlow motion, clogged and impeded with cluſters of conſonents. As men are often eſteemed who cannot be loved, ſo the poetry of Collins may ſometimes extort praiſe when it gives little pleaſure.

Mr. Collins's firſt production is added here from the *Poetical Calendar*;

TO MISS AURELIA C——R,

ON HER WEEPING AT HER SISTER'S WEDDING.

Ceaſe, fair Aurelia, ceaſe to mourn;
Lament not Hannah's happy ſtate;
You may be happy in your turn,
And ſeize the treaſure you regret.

With Love united Hymen ſtands,
And ſoftly whiſpers to your charms;
"Meet but your lover in my bands,
"You'll find your ſiſter in his arms."

DYER.

JOHN DYER, of whom I have no other account to give than his own Letters, publiſhed with Hughes's correſpondence, and the notes added by the editor, have afforded me, was born in 1700, the ſecond ſon of Robert Dyer of Aberglaſney, in Caermarthenſhire, a ſolicitor of great capacity and note.

He paſſed through Weſtminſter-ſchool under the care of Dr. Friend, and was then called home to be inſtructed in his father's profeſſion. But his father died ſoon, and he took no delight in the ſtudy of the law, but, having always amuſed himſelf with drawing, reſolved to turn painter, and become pupil to Mr. Richardſon, an artiſt then of high reputation, but now better known by his books than by his pictures.

Having ſtudied awhile under his maſter, he became, as he tells his friend, an itinerant painter, and wandered about South Wales, and the parts adjacent; but he mingled poetry with painting, and about 1727 printed *Grongar Hill*, in Lewis's Miſcellany.

Being, probably, unſatisfied with his own proficiency, he, like other painters, travelled to Italy; and coming back in 1740, publiſhed the *Ruins of Rome*.

If his poem was written ſoon after his return, he did not make much uſe of his acquiſitions in painting, whatever they might be; for decline of health, and love of ſtudy, determined him to the church. He therefore entered into orders; and, it ſeems, married about the ſame time a lady of the name of *Enſor*; "whoſe grand-mother," ſays he, "was a Shakſpeare, deſcended from a brother of every body's Shakſpeare;" by her, in 1756, he had a ſon and three daughters living.

His eccleſiaſtical proviſion was a long time but ſlender. His firſt patron, Mr. Harper, gave him, in 1741, Calthrop in Leiceſterſhire of eighty pounds a year, on which he lived ten years, and then exchanged it for Belchford

in Lincolnſhire of ſeventy-five. His condition now began to mend. In 1751, Sir John Heathcote gave him Coningſby, of one hundred and forty pounds a year; and in 1755 the Chancellor added Kirkby, of one hundred and ten. He Complains that the repair of the houſe at Coningſby, and other expences, took away the profit.

In 1757 he publiſhed the *Fleece*, his greateſt poetical works; of which I will not ſuppreſs a ludicrous ſtory. Dodſley the bookſeller was one day mentioning it to a critical viſitor, with more expectation of ſucceſs than the other could eaſily admit. In the converſation the author's age was aſked; and being repreſented as advanced in life, *He will*, ſaid the critic, *be buried in woolen.*

He did not indeed long ſurvive that publication, nor long enjoy the increaſe of his preferments; for in 1758 he died.

Dyer is not a poet of bulk or dignity ſufficient to require an elaborate criticiſm. *Grongar Hill* is the happieſt of his productions: it is not indeed very accurately written; but the ſcenes which it diſplays are ſo pleaſing, the images which they raiſe ſo welcome to the mind, and the reflections of the writer ſo conſonant to the general ſenſe or experience of mankind, that when it is once read, it will be read again.

The idea of the *Ruins of Rome* ſtrikes more but pleaſes leſs, and the title raiſes greater expectation than the performance gratifies. Some paſſages, however, are conceived with the mind of a poet; as when, in the neighbourhood of dilapidating Edifices, he ſays,

> ———At dead of night
> The hermit oft, 'midſt his oriſons, hears,
> Aghaſt, the voice of Time diſparting towers.

Of *The Fleece*, which never became popular, and is now univerſally neglected, I can ſay little that is likely to recal it to attention. The woolcomber and the poet appear to me ſuch diſcordant natures, that an attempt to bring them together is to *couple the ſerpent with the fowl.* When Dyer, whoſe mind was not unpoetical, has done his utmoſt, by intereſting his reader in our native commodity, by interſperſing rural imagery, and incidental digreſſions, by clothing ſmall images in great words, and by all the writer's arts of deluſion, the meanneſs naturally adhering, and the irreverence habitually annexed to trade and manu-

facture, ſink him under inſuperable oppreſſion; and the diſguſt which blank verſe, encumbering and encumbered, ſuperadds to an unpleaſing ſubject, ſoon repeals the reader, however willing to be pleaſed.

Let me however honeſtly report whatever may counterbalance this weight of cenſure. I have been told that Akenſide, who, upon a poetical queſtion, has a right to be heard, ſaid, "That he would regulate his opinion of the reigning taſte by the fate of Dyer's *Fleece;* for, if that were ill received, he ſhould not think it any longer reaſonable to expect fame from excellence."

SHENSTONE.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, the ſon of Thomas Shenſtone and Anne Pen, was born in November 1714, at the Leaſowes in Hales-Owen, one of thoſe inſulated diſtricts which, in the diviſion of the kingdom, was appended, for ſome reaſon not now diſcoverable, to a diſtant county; and which, though ſurrounded by Warwickſhire and Worceſterſhire, belongs to Shropſhire, though perhaps thirty miles diſtant from any other part of it.

He learned to read of an old dame, whom his poem of the *Schoolmiſtreſs* has delivered to poſterity; and ſoon received ſuch delight from books, that he was always calling for freſh entertainment, and expected that when any of the family went to market a new book ſhould be brought him, which when it came, was in fondneſs carried to bed and laid by him. It is ſaid, that when his requeſt had been neglected, his mother wrapped up a piece of wood of the ſame form, and pacified him for the night.

As he grew older, he went for a while to the Grammar-ſchool in Hales-Owen, and was placed afterwards with Mr. Crumpton, an eminent ſchoolmaſter at Solihul, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the quickneſs of his progreſs.

When he was young (June 1724) he was deprived of his father, and ſoon after (Auguſt 1729) of his grandfather; and was, with his brother, who died afterwards unmarried, left to the care of his grandmother, who managed the eſtate.

From ſchool he was ſent in 1732 to Pembroke College in Oxford, a ſociety which for half a century has been eminent for Engliſh poetry and elegant literature. Here it appears that he found delight and advantage; for he continued his name in the book ten years, though he took no degree. After the firſt four years he put on the Civilian's gown, but without ſhewing any intention to engage in the profeſſion.

About the time when he went to Oxford, the death of his grandmother devolved his affairs to the care of the reverend Mr. Dolman of Brome in Staffordſhire, whoſe attention he always mentioned with gratitude.

At Oxford he employed himſelf upon Engliſh poetry; and in 1737 publiſhed a ſmall Miſcellany, without his name.

He then for a time wandered about, to acquaint himſelf with life; and was ſometimes at London, ſometimes at Bath, or any other place of public reſort; but he did not forget his poetry. He publiſhed in 1740 his *Judgment of Hercules*, addreſſed to Mr. Lyttleton, whoſe intereſt he ſupported with great warmth at an election; this was two years afterwards followed by the *Schoolmiſtreſs*.

Mr. Dolman, to whoſe care he was indebted for his eaſe and leiſure, died in 1745, and the care of his own fortune now fell upon him. He tried to eſcape it a while, and lived at his houſe with his tenants, who were diſtantly related; but, finding that imperfect poſſeſſion inconvenient, he took the whole eſtate into his own hands, more to the improvement of its beauty than the increaſe of its produce.

Now was excited his delight in rural pleaſures, and his ambition of rural elegance: he began from this time to point his proſpects, to diverſify his ſurface, to entangle his walks, and to wind his waters; which he did with ſuch judgment and ſuch fancy, as made his little domain the envy of the great, and the admiration of the ſkilful; a place to be viſited by travellers, and copied by deſigners. Whether to plant a walk in undulating curves, and to place a bench at every turn where there is an object to catch the view; to make water run where it will be heard, and to ſtagnate where it will be ſeen; to leave intervals where the eye will be pleaſed, and to thicken the plantation where there is ſomething to be hidden, demands any great powers of mind, I will not enquire; perhaps a ſullen and ſurly ſpeculator may think ſuch performances rather the ſport than the buſineſs of human reaſon. But it muſt be at leaſt confeſſed, that to embelliſh the form of nature is an innocent amuſement; and ſome praiſe muſt be allowed by the moſt ſupercilious obſerver to him, who does beſt what ſuch multitudes are contending to do well.

This praiſe was the praiſe of Shenſtone; but, like all other modes of felicity, it was not enjoyed without its abatements. Lyttelton was his neighbour and his rival,

whoſe empire, ſpacious and opulent, looked with diſdain on the *petty State* that *appeared behind it*. For a while the inhabitants of Hagley affected to tell their acquaintance of the little fellow that was trying to make himſelf admired; but when by degrees the Leaſowes forced themſelves into notice, they took care to defeat the curioſity which they could not ſuppreſs, by conducting their viſitant preverſely to inconvenient points of view, and introducing them at the wrong end of a walk to detect a deception; injuries of which Shenſtone would heavily complain. Where there is emulation there will be vanity, and where there is vanity there will be folly.

The pleaſure of Shenſtone was all in his eye; he valued what he valued merely for its looks; nothing raiſed his indignation more than to aſk if there were any fiſhes in his water.

His houſe was mean, and he did not improve it; his care was of his grounds. When he came home from his walks he might find his floors flooded by a ſhower through the broken roof; but could ſpare no money for its reparation.

In time his expences brought clamours about him, that overpowered the lamb's bleat and the linnet's ſong; and his groves were hunted by beings very different from fawns and faries. He ſpent his eſtate in adorning it, and his death was probably haſtened by his anxieties. He was a lamp that ſpent its oil in blazing. It is ſaid, that if he had lived a little longer he would have been aſſiſted by a penſion: ſuch bounty could not have been ever more properly beſtowed; but that it was ever aſked is not certain; it is too certain that it never was enjoyed.

He died at the Leaſowes, of a putrid fever, about five on Friday morning, February 11, 1763; and was buried by the ſide of his brother in the church-yard of Hales-Owen.

He was never married, though he might have obtained the lady, whoever ſhe was, to whom his *Paſtoral Ballad* was addreſſed. He is repreſented by his friend Dodſley as a man of great tenderneſs and generoſity, kind to all that were within his influence; but, if once offended, not eaſily appeaſed; inattentive to œconomy, and careleſs of his expences; in his perſon larger than the middle ſize, with ſomething clumſy in his form; very negligent of his clothes, and remarkable for wearing his grey hair in a particular manner; for he held that the faſhion was no rule of dreſs,

and that every man was to suit his appearance to his natural form.

His mind was not very comprehensive, nor his curiosity active; he had no value for those parts of knowledge which he had not himself cultivated.

His life was unstained by any crime; the Elegy on *Jesse*, which has been supposed to relate an unfortunate and criminal amour of his own, was known by his friends to have been suggested by the story of Miss Godfrey in Richardson's *Pamela*.

What Gray thought of his character, from the perusal of his Letters, was this:

"I have read too an octavo volume of Shenstone's Letters. Poor man! he was always wishing for money, for fame, and other distinctions: and his whole philosophy consisted in living against his will in retirement, and in a place which his taste had adorned; but which he only enjoyed when people of note came to see and commend it: his correspondence is about nothing else but this place and his own writings, with two or three neighbouring clergymen, who wrote verses too."

His poems consist of elegies, odes, and ballads, humorous sallies, and moral pieces.

His conception of an Elegy he has in his Preface very judiciously and discriminately explained. It is, according to his account, the effusion of a contemplative mind, sometimes plaintive, and always serious, and therefore superior to the glitter of slight ornaments. His compositions suit not ill to this description. His topics of praise are the domestic virtues, and his thoughts are pure and simple; but, wanting combination, they want variety. The peace of solitude, the innocence of inactivity, and the unenvied security of an humble station, can fill but a few pages. That of which the essence is uniformity will be soon described. His Elegies have therefore too much resemblance of each other.

The lines are sometimes, such as Elegy requires, smooth and easy; but to this praise his claim is not constant: his diction is often harsh, improper, and affected; his words ill-coined, are ill-chosen, and his phrase unskilfully inverted.

The Lyric Poems are almost all of the light and airy kind, such as trip lightly and nimbly along, without the load of any weighty meaning. From these, however, *Ru-*

ral Elegance has ſome right to be excepted. I once heard it praiſed by a very learned lady; and though the lines are irregular, and the thoughts diffuſed with too much verboſity, yet it cannot be denied to contain both philoſophical argument and poetical ſpirit.

Of the reſt I cannot think any excellent; the *Skylark* pleaſes me beſt, which has however more of the epigram than of the ode.

But the four parts of his *Paſtoral Ballad* demand particular notice. I cannot but regret that it is paſtoral; an intelligent reader, acquainted with the ſcenes of real life, ſickens at the mention of the *crook*, the *pipe*, the *sheep*, and the *kids*, which it is not neceſſary to bring forward to notice, for the poet's art is ſelection, and he ought to ſhew the beauties without the groſſneſs of the country life. His ſtanza ſeems to have been choſen in imitation of Rowe's *Despairing Shepherd*.

In the firſt part are two paſſages, to which if any mind denies its ſympathy, it has no acquaintance with love or nature:

I priz'd every hour that went by,
Beyond all that had pleas'd me before;
But now they are paſt, and I ſigh,
And I grieve that I priz'd them no more.

When forc'd the fair nymph to forego,
What anguiſh I felt in my heart!
Yet I thought—but it might not be ſo,
'Twas with pain that ſhe ſaw me depart.

She gaz'd, as I ſlowly withdrew;
My path I could hardly diſcern;
So ſweetly ſhe bade me adieu,
I thought that ſhe bade me return.

In the ſecond this paſſage has its prettineſs, though it be not equal to the former:

I have found out a gift for my fair;
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed:
But let me that plunder forbear,
She will ſay 'twas a barbarous deed:

For he ne'er could be true, ſhe averr'd,
Who could rob a poor bird of its young;
And I lov'd her the more, when I heard
Such tenderneſs fall from her tongue.

In the third he mentions the common-places of amorous poetry with ſome addreſs:

'Tis his with mock paſſion to glow;
'Tis his in ſmooth tales to unfold,
How her face is as bright as the ſnow,
And her boſom, be ſure, is as cold:

How the nightingales labour the ſtrain,
With the notes of his charmer to vie;
How they vary their accents in vain,
Repine at her triumps, and die.

In the fourth I find nothing better than this natural ſtrain of Hope:

Alas! from the day that we met,
What hope of an end to my woes?
When I cannot endure to forget
The glance that undid my repoſe.

Yet Time may diminiſh the pain:
The flower, and the ſhrub, and the tree,
Which I rear'd for her pleaſure in vain,
In time may have comfort for me.

His *Levities* are by their title exempted from the ſeverities of criticiſm; yet it may be remarked, in a few words, that his humour is ſometimes groſs, and ſeldom ſpritely.

Of the Moral Poems the firſt is the *Choice of Hercules*, from Xenophon. The numbers are ſmooth, the diction elegant, and the thoughts juſt: but ſomething of vigour perhaps is ſtill to be wiſhed, which it might have had by brevity and compreſſion. His *Fate of Delicacy* has an air of gaiety, but not a very pointed general moral. His blank verſes, thoſe that can read them may probably find to be like the blank verſes of his neighbours. *Love and Honour* is derived from the old ballad, *Did you not hear of a Spaniſh Lady*—I wiſh it well enough to wiſh it were in rhyme.

The *Schoolmiſtreſs*, of which I know not what claim it has to ſtand among the Moral Works, is ſurely the moſt pleaſing of Shenſtone's performances. The adoption of a particular ſtyle, in light and ſhort compoſitions, contributes much to the increaſe of pleaſure: we are entertained at once with two imitations, of nature in the ſentiments, of the original author in the ſtyle, and between them the mind is kept in perpetual employment.

The general recommendation of Shenſtone is eaſineſs and ſimplicity; his general defect is want of comprehenſion and variety. Had his mind been better ſtored with knowledge, whether he could have been great, I know not; he could certainly have been agreeable.

YOUNG.

THE following Life was written, at my requeſt, by a gentleman who had better information than I could eaſily have obtained; and the public will perhaps with that I had ſolicited and obtained more ſuch favours from him.

"DEAR SIR,

"In conſequence of our different converſations about authentic materials for the Life of Young, I ſend you the following detail. It is not, I confeſs, immediately in the line of my profeſſion; but hard indeed is our fate at the bar, if we may not call a few hours now and then our own."

"Of great men ſomething muſt always be ſaid to gratify curioſity. Of the great author of the *Night Thoughts* much has been told of which there never could have been proofs; and little care appears to have been taken to tell that of which proofs, with little trouble, might have been procured."

EDWARD YOUNG was born at Upham, near Winchester, in June 1681. He was the ſon of Edward Young, at that time Fellow of Winchester College and Rector of Upham; who was the ſon of Jo. Young of Woodhay in Berkſhire, ſtyled by Wood *gentleman*. In September 1682 the Poet's father was collated to the prebend of Gillingham Minor, in the church of Sarum, by biſhop Ward. When Ward's faculties were impaired by age, his duties were neceſſarily performed by others. We learn from Wood, that, at a viſitation of Sprat, July the 12th, 1686, the Prebendary preached a Latin ſermon, afterwards publiſhed, with which the Biſhop was ſo pleaſed, that he told the Chapter he was concerned to find the preacher had one of the worſt prebends in their church. Some time after this, in conſequence of his merit and reputation, or of the intereſt of Lord Bardford, to whom, in 1702, he dedicated two volumes of ſermons, he was appointed chaplain to King William and

Queen Mary, and preferred to the deanery of Sarum. Jacob, who wrote in 1720, says he was chaplain and clerk of the closet to the late Queen, who honoured him by standing god-mother to the Poet. His fellowship of Winchester he resigned in favour of a Mr. Harris, who marries his only daughter. The Dean died at Sarum, after a short illness, in 1705, in the sixty-third year of his age. On the Sunday after his decease Bishop Burnet preached at the cathedral, and began his Sermon with saying, "Death has been of late walking round us, and making breach upon breach upon us, and has now carried away the head of this body with a stroke; so that he, whom you saw a week ago distributing the holy mysteries, is now laid in the dust. But he still lives in the many excellent directions he has left us both how to live and how to die."

The Dean placed his son upon the foundation at Winchester College, where he had himself been educated. At this school Edward Young remained till the election after his eighteenth birth-day, the period at which those upon the foundation are superannuated. Whether he did not betray his abilities early in life, or his masters had not skill enough to discover in their pupil any marks of genius for which he merited reward, or no vacancy at Oxford afforded them an opportunity to bestow upon him the reward provided for merit by William of Wykeham; certain it is that to an Oxford fellowship our Poet did not succeed. By chance, or by choice, New College does not number among its Fellows him who wrote the *Night Thoughts*.

On the 13th of October, 1703, he was entered an Independent Member of New College, that he might live at little expence in the Warden's lodgings, who was a particular friend of his father, till he should be qualified to stand for a fellowship at All-souls. In a few months the warden of New College died. He then removed to Corpus College. The President of this Society, from regard also for his father, invited him thither, in order to lessen his academical expences. In 1708, he was nominated to a law fellowship at All-souls by Archbishop Tennison, into whose hands it came by devolution.—Such repeated patronage, while it justifies Burnet's praise of the father, reflects credit on the conduct of the son. The manner in which it was exerted seems to prove that the father did not leave behind him much wealth.

On the 23d of April, 1714, Young took his degree of Bachelor of Civil Laws, and his Doctors degree on the 10th of June, 1719.

Soon after he went to Oxford, he diſcovered, it is ſaid, an inclination for pupils. Whether he ever commenced tutor is not known. None has hitherto boaſted to have received his academical inſtruction from the author of the *Night Thoughts.*

It is certain that his college was proud of him no leſs as a ſcholar than as a poet; for, in 1716, when the foundation of the Codrington Library was laid, two years after he had taken his Bachelor's degree, he was appointed to ſpeak the Latin oration. This is at leaſt particular for being dedicated in Engliſh *To the Ladies of the Codrington Family.* To theſe Ladies he ſays, "that he was unavoidably flung into a ſingularity, by being obliged to write an epiſtle dedicatory void of common-place, and ſuch an one as was never publiſhed before by any author whatever:—that this practice abſolved them from any obligation of reading what was preſented to them;—and that the bookſeller approved of it, becauſe it would make people ſtare, was abſurd enough, and perfectly right."

Of this oration there is no appearance in his own edition of his works; and prefixed to an edition by Curll and Tonſon, in 1741, is a letter from Young to Curll, if Curll may be credited, dated December the 9th, 1739, wherein he ſays he has not leiſure to review what he formerly wrote, and adds, "I have not the *Epiſtle to Lord Lansdowne.* If you will take my advice, I would have you omit that, and the oration on *Codrington.* I think the collection will ſell better without them."

There are who relate, that, when firſt Young found himſelf independent, and his own maſter at All-ſouls, he was not the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became.

The authority of his father, indeed, had ceaſed ſome time before by his death; and Young was certainly not aſhamed to be patronized by the infamous Wharton. But Wharton befriended in Young, perhaps, the poet, and particularly the tragedian. If virtuous authors muſt be patronized only by virtuous peers, who ſhall point them out?

Yet Pope is ſaid by Ruffhead to have told Warburton, that "Young had much of a ſublime genius, though with-

out common ſenſe ; ſo that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombaſt. This made him, paſs a *foolish youth*, the ſport of peers and poets ; but his having a very good heart enabled him to ſupport the clerical character when he aſſumed it, firſt with decency, and afterwards with honour."

They who think ill of Young's morality in the early part of his life, may perhaps be wrong ; but Tindal could not err in his opinion of Young's warmth and ability in the cauſe of religion. Tindal uſed to ſpend much of his time at All-ſouls. "The other boys," ſaid the atheiſt, "I can always anſwer, becauſe I always know whence they have their arguments, which I have read an hundred times ; but that fellow Young is continually peſtering me with ſomething of his own."

After all, Tindal and the cenſurers of Young may be reconcileable. Young might, for two or three years, have tried that kind of life, in which his natural principles would not ſuffer him to wallow long. If this were ſo, he has left behind him not only his evidence in favour of virtue, but the potent teſtimony of experience againſt vice.

We ſhall ſoon ſee that one of his earlieſt productions was more ſerious than what comes from the generality of unfledged poets.

Young perhaps aſcribed the good fortune of Addiſon to the *Poem to his Majesty*, preſented, with a copy of verſes, to Somers ; and hoped that he alſo might ſoar to wealth and honours on wings of the ſame kind. His firſt poetical flight was when Queen Anne called up to the Houſe of Lords the ſons of the Earls of Northampton and Ayleſbury, and added, in one day, ten others to the number of peers. In order to reconcile the people to one at leaſt of the new Lords, he publiſhed in 1712 *An Epistle to the Right Honourable George Lord Lansdowne*. In this compoſition the poet pours out his panegyric with the extravagance of a young man, who thinks his preſent ſtock of wealth will never be exhauſted.

The poem ſeems intended alſo to reconcile the public to the late peace. This is endeavoured to be done by ſhewing that men are ſlain in war, and that in peace *harvests wave and commerce swells her sail.* If this be humanity, is it politics ? Another purpoſe of this Epiſtle appears to have been, to prepare the public for the reception of ſome tra-

gedy of his own. His Lordſhip's patronage, he ſays, will not let him *repent his paſſion for the ſtage;*——and the particular praiſe beſtowed on *Othello* and *Oroonoko* looks as if ſome ſuch character as *Zanga* was even then in contemplation. The affectionate mention of the death of his friend Harriſon of New College, at the cloſe of this poem, is an inſtance of Young's art, which diſplayed itſelf ſo wonderfully ſome time afterwards in the *Night Thoughts*, of making the public a party in his private ſorrow.

Should juſtice call upon you to cenſure this poem, it ought at leaſt to be remembered that he did not inſert it into his works; and that in the letter to Curll, as we have ſeen, he adviſes its omiſſion. The bookſellers in the late Body of Engliſh Poetry, ſhould have diſtinguiſhed what was deliberately rejected by the reſpective authors. This I ſhall be careful to do with regard to Young. "I think," ſays he, "the following pieces in *four* volumes to be the moſt excuſeable of all that I have written; and I wiſh *leſs apology* was needful for theſe. As there is no recalling what is got abroad, the pieces here republiſhed I have reviſed and corrected, and rendered them as *pardonable* as it was in my power to do."

Shall the gates of repentance be ſhut only againſt literary ſinners?

When Addiſon publiſhed *Cato* in 1713, Young had the honour of prefixing to it a recommendatory copy of verſes. This is one of the pieces which the author of the *Night Thoughts* did not republiſh.

On the appearance of his *Poem on the Laſt Day*, Addiſon did not return Young's compliment; but *The Engliſhman* of October 29, 1713, which was probably written by Addiſon, ſpeaks handſomely of this poem. The *Laſt Day* was publiſhed ſoon after the peace. The vice chancellor's *imprimatur*, for it was firſt printed at Oxford, is dated May the 19th, 1713. From the Exordium Young appears to have ſpent ſome time on the compoſition of it. While other bards *with Britain's hero ſet their ſouls on fire*, he draws, he ſays, a deeper ſcene. Marlborough *had been* conſidered by Britain as her *hero;* but, when the *Laſt Day* was publiſhed, female cabal had blaſted for a time the laurels of Blenheim. This ſerious poem was finiſhed by Young as early as 1710, before he was thirty; for part of it is printed in the *Tatler*. It was inſcribed to the Queen, in a dedication, which, for ſome reaſon, he did not admit

into his works. It tells her, that his only title to the great honour he now does himſelf is the obligation he formerly received from her royal indulgence.

Of this obligation nothing is now known, unleſs he alluded to her being his godmother. He is ſaid indeed to have been engaged at a ſettled ſtipend as a writer for the court. In Swift's "Rhapſody on Poetry" are theſe lines, ſpeaking of the court——

Whence Gay was baniſh'd in diſgrace,
Where Pope will never ſhow his face,
Where Y—— muſt torture his invention
To flatter knaves, or loſe his penſion.

That Y—— means Young, is clear from four other lines in the ſame poem.

Attend, ye Popes and Youngs and Gays,
And tune your harps and ſtrew your bays;
Your panegyrics here provide;
You cannot err on flattery's ſide.

Yet who ſhall ſay with certainty that Young was a penſioner? In all modern periods of this country, have not the writers on one ſide been regularly called Hirelings, and on the other Patriots?

Of the dedication the complexion is clearly political. It ſpeaks in the higheſt terms of the late peace;—it gives her Majeſty praiſe indeed for her victories, but ſays, that the author is more pleaſed to ſee her riſe from this lower world ſoaring above the clouds, paſſing the firſt and ſecond heavens, and leaving the fixed ſtars behind her;——nor will he loſe her there, but keep her ſtill in view through the boundleſs ſpaces on the other ſide of Creation, in her journey towards eternal bliſs, till he behold the heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying her ſtill onward from the ſtretch of his imagination, which tires in her purſuit, and falls back again to earth.

The Queen was ſoon called away from this lower world, to a place where human praiſe or human flattery even leſs general than this are of little conſequence. If Young thought the dedication contained only the praiſe of truth, he ſhould not have omitted it in his works. Was he conſcious of the exaggeration of party? Then he ſhould not have written it. The poem itſelf is not without a glance

to politics, notwithſtanding the ſubject. The cry that the church was in danger, had not yet ſubſided. The *Last Day*, written by a layman, was much approved by the miniſtry, and their friends.

Before the Queen's death, *The Force of Religion, or Vanquiſhed Love*, was ſent into the world. This poem is founded on the execution of Lady Jane Gray and her huſband Lord Guildford in 1554—a ſtory choſen for the ſubject of a tragedy by Edmund Smith, and wrought into a tragedy by Rowe. The dedication of it to the counteſs of Saliſbury does not appear in his own edition. He hopes it may be ſome excuſe for his preſumption that the ſtory could not have been read without thoughts of the Counteſs of Saliſbury, though it had been dedicated to another. "To behold," he proceeds, "a perſon *only* virtuous, ſtirs in us a prudent regret; to behold a perſon *only* amiable to the ſight, warms us with a religious indignation; but to turn our eyes on a Counteſs of Saliſbury; gives us pleaſure and improvement; it works a ſort of miracle, occaſions the biaſs of our nature to fall off from ſin, and makes our very ſenſes and affections converts to our religion, and promoters of our duty." His flattery was as ready for the other ſex as for ours, and was at leaſt as well adapted.

Auguſt the 27th, 1714, Pope writes to his friend Jervas, that he is juſt arrived from Oxford—that every one is much concerned for the Queen's death, but that no panegyrics are ready yet for the King. Nothing like friendſhip had yet taken place between Pope and Young; for, ſoon after the event which Pope mentions, Young publiſhed a poem on the Queen's death, and his Majeſty's acceſſion to the throne. It is inſcribed to Addiſon, then ſecretary to the Lords Juſtices. Whatever was the obligation which he had formerly received from Anne, the poet appears to aim at ſomething of the ſame ſort from George. Of the poem the intention ſeems to have been, to ſhew that he had the ſame extravagant ſtrain of praiſe for a King as for a Queen. To diſcover, at the very outſet of a foreigner's reign, that the Gods bleſs his new ſubjects in ſuch a King, is ſomething more than praiſe. Neither was this deemed one of his *excuſeable pieces*. We do not find it in his works.

Young's father had been well acquainted with Lady Anne Wharton, the firſt wife of Thomas Wharton, Eſq. afterwards Marquis of Wharton——a Lady celebrated for her poetical talents by Burnet and by Waller. To the Dean

of Sarum's viſitation ſermon, already mentioned, were added ſome verſes "by that excellent poeteſs Mrs. Anne Wharton," upon its being tranſlated into Engliſh, at the inſtance of Waller, by Atwood. Wharton, after he became ennobled, did not drop the ſon of his old friend. In him, during the ſhort time he lived, Young found a patron, and in his diſſolute deſcendant a friend and a companion. The Marquis died in April 1715. The beginning of the next year the young Marquis ſet out upon his travels, from which he returned in about a twelvemonth. The beginning of 1717 carried him to Ireland; where, ſays the Biographia, "on the ſcore of his extraordinary qualitis, he had the honour done him of being admitted, though under age, to take his ſeat in the Houſe of Lords."

With this unhappy character it is not unlikely that Young went to Ireland. From his Letter to Richardſon on *Original Compoſition*, it is clear he was, at ſome period of his life, in that country. "I remember," ſays he, in that Letter, ſpeaking of Swift, "as I and others were taking with him an evening walk, about a mile out of *Dublin*, he ſtopt ſhort; we paſſed on; but, perceiving he did not follow us, I went back, and found him fixed as a ſtatue, and earneſtly gazing upward at a noble elm, which in its uppermoſt branches was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it," he ſaid, "I ſhall be like that tree, I ſhall die at top."——Is it not probable, that this viſit to Ireland was paid when he had an opportunity of going thither with his avowed friend and patron?

From *The Engliſhman* it appears that a tragedy by Young was in the theatre ſo early as 1713. Yet *Buſiris* was not brought upon Drury-Lane Stage till 1719. It was inſcribed to the Duke of Newcaſtle, "becauſe the late inſtances he had received of his Grace's undeſerved and uncommon favour, in an affair of ſome conſequence, foreign to the theatre, had taken from him the privilege of chuſing a patron." The Dedication he afterwards ſuppreſſed.

Buſiris was followed in the year 1721 by *The Revenge*. Left at liberty now to chuſe his patron, he dedicated this famous tragedy to the Duke of Wharton. "Your Grace," ſays the Dedication, "has been pleaſed to make yourſelf acceſſary to the following ſcenes, not only by ſuggeſting the moſt beautiful incident in them, but by making all poſſible proviſion for the ſucceſs of the whole."

That his Grace ſhould have ſuggeſted the incident to which he alludes, whatever that incident be, is not unlikely. The laſt mental exertion of the ſuperannuated young man, in his quarters at Lerida, in Spain, was ſome ſcenes of a tragedy on the ſtory of Mary Queen of Scots.

Dryden dedicated *Marriage a la Mode* to Wharton's infamous relation Rocheſter; whom he acknowledges not only as the defender of his poetry, but as the promoter of his fortune. Young concludes his addreſs to Wharton thus—"Mr. preſent fortune is his bounty, and my future his care; which I will venture to ſay will be always remembered to his honour, ſince he, I know, intended his generoſity as an encouragement to merit, though, through his very pardonable partiality to one who bears him ſo ſincere a duty and reſpect, I happen to receive the benefit of it." That he ever had ſuch a patron as Wharton, Young took all the pains in his power to conceal from the world, by excluding this dedication from his works. He ſhould have remembered, that he at the ſame time concealed his obligation to Wharton for the *moſt beautiful incident* in what is ſurely not his leaſt beautiful compoſition. The paſſage juſt quoted is, in a poem afterwards addreſſed to Walpole, literally copied;

> Be this thy partial ſmile from cenſure free;
> 'Twas meant for merit, though it fell on me.

While Young, who, in his *Love of Fame*, complains grevioufly how often *dedications waſh an Ethiop white*, was painting an amiable Duke of Wharton in periſhable proſe, Pope was perhaps beginning to deſcribe the *ſcorn and wonder of his days* in laſting verſe.

To the patronage of ſuch a character, had Young ſtudied men as much as Pope, he would have known how little to have truſted. Young, however, was certainly indebted to it for ſomething material; and the Duke's regard for Young, added to his *Luſt of Praiſe*, procured to All-ſouls College a donation, which was not forgotten by the poet when he dedicated *The Revenge*.

It will ſurprize you to ſee me cite ſecond Atkins, Caſe 136, Stiles *verſus* the Attorney General, 14th March 1740; as authority for the Life of a Poet. But Biographers do not always find ſuch certain guides as the oaths of thoſe whoſe lives they write. Chancellor Hardwicke was to determine whether two annuities, granted by the Duke

of Wharton to Young, were for legal conſiderations. One was dated the 24th of March 1719, and accounted for his Grace's bounty in a ſtyle princely and commendable, if not legal—"conſidering that the public good is advanced by the encouragement of learning and the polite arts, and being pleaſed therein with the attempts of Dr. Young, in conſideration thereof, and of the love he bore him, &c." The other was dated the 10th of July, 1722.

Young, on his examination, ſwore that he quitted the Exeter family, and refuſed an annuity of 100l. which had been offered him for his life if he would continue tutor to Lord Burleigh, upon the preſſing ſolicitations of the Duke of Wharton, and his Grace's aſſurances of providing for him in a much more ample manner. It alſo appeared that the Duke had given him a bond for 600l. dated the 15th of March 1721, in conſideration of his taking ſeveral journies, and being at great expences, in order to be choſen member of the Houſe of Commons at the Duke's deſire, and in conſideration of his not taking two livings of 200l. and 400l. in the gift of All-ſouls College, on his Grace's promiſes of ſerving and advancing him in the world.

Of his adventures in the Exeter family I am unable to give any account. The attempt to get into Parliament was at Cirenceſter, where Young ſtood a conteſted election. His Grace diſcovered in him talents for oratory as well as for poetry. Nor was this judgment wrong. Young, after he took orders, became a very popular preacher, and was much followed for the grace and animation of his delivery. By his oratorical talents he was once in his life, according to the Biographia, deſerted. As he was preaching in his turn at St. James's, he plainly perceived it was out of his power to command the attention of his audience. This ſo affected the feelings of the preacher, that he ſat back in the pulpit, and burſt into tears.—But we muſt purſue his poetical life.

In 1719 he lamented the death of Addiſon, in a Letter addreſſed to their common friend Tickell. For the ſecret hiſtory of the following lines, if they contain any, it is now vain to ſeek:

> *In joy once join'd*, in ſorrow, now, for years—
> Partner in grief, and brother of my tears,
> Tickell, accept this verſe, thy mournful due.

From your account of Tickell it appears that he and Young uſed to "communicate to each other whatever verſes they wrote, even to the leaſt things."

In 1719 appeared a *Paraphraſe on Part of the Book of Job.* Parker, to whom it is dedicated, had not long, by means of the ſeals, been qualified for a patron. Of this work the author's opinion may be known from his Letter to Curll: "You ſeem, in the Collection you purpoſe, to have omitted what I think may claim the firſt place in it; I mean *a Tranſlation from Part of Job*, printed by Mr. Tonſon." The Dedication, which was only ſuffered to appear in Tonſon's edition, while it ſpeaks with ſatisfaction of his preſent retirement, ſeems to make an unuſual ſtruggle to eſcape from retirement. But every one who ſings in the dark does not ſing from joy. It is addreſſed, in no common ſtrain of flattery, to a Chancellor, of whom he clearly appears to have had no kind of knowledge.

Of his Satires it would not have been impoſſible to fix the dates without the aſſiſtance of firſt editions, which, as you had occaſion to obſerve in your account of Dryden, are with difficulty found. We muſt then have referred to the Poems, to diſcover when they were written. For theſe internal notes of time we ſhould not have referred in vain. The firſt Satire laments that "Guilt's chief foe in Addiſon is fled." The ſecond, addreſſing himſelf, aſks,

> Is thy ambition ſweating for a rhyme,
> Thou unambitious fool, at this late time;
> A fool at *forty* is a fool indeed.

The Satires were originally publiſhed ſeparately in folio, under the title of *The Univerſal Paſſion.* Theſe paſſages fix the appearance of the firſt to about 1725, the time at which it came out. As Young ſeldom ſuffered his pen to dry, after he had once dipped it in poetry, we may conclude that he began his Satires ſoon after he had written the *Paraphraſe on Job.* The laſt Satire was certainly finiſhed in the beginning of the year 1726. In December 1725 the King, in his paſſage from Helvoetſluys, eſcaped with great difficulty from a ſtorm by landing at Rye; and the concluſion of the Satire turns the eſcape into a miracle, in ſuch an encomiaſtic ſtrain of compliment as poetry too often ſeeks to pay to royalty.

From the ſixth of theſe poems we learn,

> Midſt empire's charms, how Carolina's heart
> Glow'd with the love of virtue and of art:

ſince the grateful poet tells us in the next couplet,

> Her favour is diffus'd to that degree,
> Exceſs of goodneſs! it has dawn'd on me.

Her Majeſty had ſtood godmother, and given her name to a daughter of the Lady whom Young married in 1731.

The fifth Satire, *on Women*, was not publiſhed till 1727; and the ſixth not till 1728.

To theſe Poems, when, in 1728, he gathered them into one publication, he prefixed a Preface; in which he obſerves, that "no man can converſe much in the world, but, at what he meets with, he muſt either be inſenſible or grieve, or be angry or ſmile. Now to ſmile at it, and turn it into ridicule," adds he, "I think moſt eligible, as it hurts ourſelves leaſt, and gives vice and folly the greateſt offence.——Laughing at the miſconduct of the world, will, in a great meaſure, eaſe us of any more diſagreeable paſſion about it. One paſſion is more effectually driven out by another than by reaſon, whatever ſome teach." So wrote, and ſo of courſe thought, the lively and witty Satiriſt at the grave age of almoſt fifty, who, many years earlier in life, wrote the *Last Day*. After all, Swift pronounced of theſe Satires, that they ſhould either have been more angry, or more merry.

Is it not ſomewhat ſingular that Young preſerved, without any palliation, this Preface, ſo bluntly deciſive in favour of laughing at the world, in the ſame collection of his works which contains the mournful angry, gloomy *Night Thoughts?*

At the concluſion of the Preface he applies Plato's beautiful fable of the *Birth of Love* to modern poetry, with the addition, "that Poetry, like Love, is a little ſubject to blindneſs, which makes her miſtake her way to preferments and honours; and that ſhe retains a dutiful admiration of her father's family; but divides her favours, and generally lives with her mother's relations." Poetry, it is true, did not lead Young to preferments or to honours; but was there not ſomething like blindneſs in the flattery which he ſometimes forced her, and her ſiſter Proſe, to utter? She was always, indeed, taught by him to entertain a moſt du-

tiful admiration of riches; but furely Young, though nearly related to Poetry, had no connexion with her whom Plato makes the mother of Love. That he could not well complain of being related to Poverty appears clearly from the frequent bounties which his gratitude records, and from the wealth which he left behind him. By *The Univerſal Paſſion* he acquired no vulgar fortune, more than three thouſand pounds. A conſiderable ſum had already been ſwallowed up in the South-Sea. For this loſs he took the vengeance of an author, His Muſe makes poetical uſe more than once of a *South Sea* Dream.

It is related by Mr. Spence, in his Manuſcript Anecdotes, on the authority of Mr. *Rawlinſon*, that Young, upon the publication of his *Univerſal Paſſion*, received from the Duke of Grafton two thouſand pounds; and that, when one of his friends exclaimed, *Two thouſand pounds for a poem!* he ſaid it was the beſt bargain he ever made in his life, for the poem was worth four thouſand.

This ſtory may be true; but it ſeems to have been raiſed from the two anſwers of Lord Burghley and Sir Philip Sidney in Spenſer's Life.

After inſcribing his Satires, not without the hope of preferments and honours, to the Duke of Dorſet, Mr. Doddington, Mr. Spenſer Compton, Lady Elizabeth Germain, and Sir Robert Walpole, he returns to plain panegyric. In 1726 he addreſſed a poem to Sir Robert Walpole, of which the title ſufficiently explains the intention. If Young was a ready celebrator, he did not endeavour, or did not chooſe, to be a laſting one. *The Inſtalment* is among the pieces he did not admit into the number of his *excuſeable writings*. Yet it contains a couplet which pretends to pant after the power of beſtowing immortality:

> Oh how I long, enkindled by the theme,
> In deep eternity to launch thy name!

The bounty of the former reign ſeems to have been continued, poſſibly increaſed, in this. Whatever it was, the poet thought he deſerved it;——for he was not aſhamed to acknowledge what, without his acknowledgment, would now perhaps never have been known:

> My breaſt, O Walpole, glows with grateful fire.
> The ſtreams of royal bounty, turn'd by thee,
> Refreſh the dry domains of poeſy.

If the purity of modern patriotism term Young a pensioner, it must at least be confessed he was a grateful one.

The reign of the new monarch was ushered in by Young with *Ocean, an Ode.* The hint of it was taken from the royal speech, which recommended the increase and encouragement of the seamen; that they might be *invited, rather than compelled by force and violence, to enter into the service of their country*;——a plan which humanity must lament that policy has not even yet been able, or willing, to carry into execution. Prefixed to the original publication were an *Ode to the King*, *Pater Patriæ*, and an *Essay on Lyric Poetry.* It is but justice to confess, that he preserved neither of them; and that the ode itself, which in the first edition, and in the last, consists of seventy-three stanzas, in the author's own edition is reduced to forty-nine. Among the omitted passages is *a Wish*, that concluded the poem, which few would have suspected Young of forming; and of which few, after having formed it, would confess something like their shame by suppression.

It stood originally so high in the author's opinion, that he intitled the Poem, "Ocean, an Ode, *Concluding with a wish.*" This wish consists of thirteen stanzas. The first runs thus:

O may I *steal*
Along the *vale*
Of humble life, secure from foes!
My friend sincere,
My judgment clear,
And gentle business my repose!

The three last stanzas are not more remarkable for just rhymes; but, altogether, they will make rather a curious page in the life of Young.

Prophetic schemes,
And golden dreams,
May I, unsanguine, cast away!
Have what I *have*,
And live, not *leave*,
Enamoured of the present day!

My hours my own!
My faults unknown!
My chief revenue in content!
Then leave one *beam*
Of honest *fame!*
And scorn the laboured monument!

Unhurt my urn
Till that great *turn*
When mighty nature's ſelf ſhall die,
Time ceaſe to glide,
With human pride,
Sunk in the ocean of eternity!

It is whimſical that he, who was ſoon to bid adieu to rhyme, ſhould fix upon a meaſure in which abounds even to ſatiety. Of this he ſaid, in his *Eſſay on Lyric Poetry*, prefixed to the Poem,—"For the more *harmony* likewiſe I choſe the frequent return of rhyme, which laid me under great difficulties. But difficulties, overcome, give grace and pleaſure. Nor can I account for the *pleaſure of rhyme in general* (of which the moderns are too fond) but from this truth." Yet the moderns ſurely deſerve not much cenſure for their fondneſs of what, by his own confeſſion, affords pleaſure, and abounds in harmony.

The next paragraph in his *eſſay* did not occur to him when he talked of *that great turn* in the ſtanza juſt quoted. "But then the writer muſt take care that the difficulty is overcome. That is, he muſt make rhyme conſiſtent with as perfect ſenſe and expreſſion, as could be expected if he was perfectly free from that ſhackle."

Another part of this *Eſſay* will convict the following ſtanza of, what every reader will diſcover in it, involuntary burleſque."

The northern blaſt,
The ſhattered maſt,
The ſyrt, the whirlpool, and the rock,
The breaking ſpout,
The *ſtars gone out*,
The boiling ſtreight, the monſter's ſhock.

But would the Engliſh poets fill quite ſo many volumes, if all their productions were to be tried, like this, by an elaborate eſſay on each particular ſpecies of poetry of which they exhibit ſpecimens?

If Young be not a Lyric poet, he is at leaſt a critic in that ſort of poetry; and, if his Lyric poetry can be proved bad, it was firſt proved ſo by his own criticiſm. This ſurely is candid.

Milbourne was ſtyled by Pope *the fairest of Critics*, only becauſe he exhibited his own verſion of Virgil to be compared with Dryden's which he condemned, and with which

every reader had it otherwiſe in his power to compare it. Young was ſurely not the moſt unfair of poets for prefixing to a Lyric compoſition an eſſay on Lyric poetry ſo juſt and impartial as to condemn himſelf.

We ſhall ſoon come to a work, before which we find indeed no critical Eſſay, but which diſdains to ſhrink from the touch-ſtone of the ſevereſt critic; and which certainly, as I remember to have heard you ſay, if it contains ſome of the worſt, contains alſo ſome of the beſt things in the language.

Soon after the appearance of "Ocean," when he was almoſt fifty, Young entered into Orders. In April 1728, not long after he put on the gown, he was appointed chaplain to George the Second.

The tragedy of *The Brothers*, which was already in rehearſal, he immediately withdrew from the ſtage. The managers reſigned it with ſome reluctance to the delicacy of the new clergyman. The Epilogue to *The Brothers*, the only appendage to any of his three plays which he added himſelf, is, I believe, the only one of the kind. He calls it an *hiſtorical* Epiloge. Finding that *Guilt's dreadful cloſe his narrow ſcene denied*, he, in a manner, continues the tragedy in the Epilogue, and relates how Rome revenged the ſhade of Demetrius, and puniſhed Perſeus *for this night's deed.*

Of Young's taking Orders ſomething is told by the biographer of Pope, which places the eaſineſs and ſimplicity of the poet in a ſingular light. When he determined on the Church, he did not addreſs himſelf to Sherlock, to Atterbury, or to Hare, for the beſt inſtructions in Theology, but to Pope; who, in a youthful frolic, adviſed the diligent peruſal of *Thomas Aquinas.* With this treaſure Young retired from interruption to an obſcure place in the ſuburbs. His poetical guide to godlineſs hearing nothing of him during half a year, and apprehending he might have carried the jeſt too far, ſought after him, and found him juſt in time to prevent what Ruffhead calls *an irretrievable derangement.*

That attachment to his favourite ſtudy which made him think a poet the ſureſt guide in his new profeſſion, left him little doubt whether poetry was the ſureſt path to its honours and preferments. Not long indeed after he took Orders, he publiſhed in proſe, 1728, *A true Eſtimate of Human Life*, dedicated, notwithſtanding the Latin quota-

tions with which it abounds, to the Queen; and a ſermon preached before the Houſe of Commons, 1729, on the martyrdom of King Charles, intituled, *An Epilogue for Princes, or the Reverence due to Government.* But the "Second Diſcourſe," the counterpart of his "Eſtimate," without which it cannot be called "a *true* eſtimate," though in 1728 it was announced as "ſoon to be publiſhed," never appeared; and his old friends the Muſes were not forgotten. In 1730 he relapſed to poetry, and ſent into the world *Imperium Pelagi; a Naval Lyric, written in Imitation of Pindar's Spirit, occaſioned by His Majeſty's Return from Hanover, September 1729, and the ſucceeding Peace.* It is inſcribed to the Duke of Chandos. In the Preface we are told, that the Ode is the moſt ſpirited kind of Poetry, and that the Pindaric is the moſt ſpirited kind of Ode. "This I ſpeak," he adds, with ſufficient candour, "at my own very great peril. But truth has an eternal title to our confeſſion, though we are ſure to ſuffer by it." Behold, again, *the fairest of poets.* Young's *Imperium Pelagi*, as well as his tragedies, was ridiculed in Fielding's *Tom Thumb;* but let us not forget, that it was one of his pieces which the author of the *Night Thoughts* deliberately refuſed to own.

Not long after this Pindaric attempt, he publiſhed two Epiſtles to Pope, *concerning the Authors of the Age*, 1730. Of theſe poems one occaſion ſeems to have been an apprehenſion leſt, from the livelineſs of his ſatires, he ſhould not be deemed ſufficiently ſerious for promotion in the Church.

In July 1730 he was preſented by his College to the rectory of Welwyn in Hertfordſhire. In May 1731 he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Litchfield, and widow of Colonel Lee. His connexion with this Lady aroſe from his father's acquaintance, already mentioned, with Lady Anne Wharton, who was coheireſs of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley in Oxfordſhire. Poetry had lately been taught by Addiſon to aſpire to the arms of nobility, though not with extraordinary happineſs.

We may naturally conclude that Young now gave himſelf up in ſome meaſure to the comforts of his new connexion, and to the expectations of that preferment which he thought due to his poetical talents, or at leaſt, to the manner in which they had ſo frequently been exerted.

The next production of his Muſe was *The Sea-piece*, in two odes.

Young enjoys the credit of what is called an *Extempore Epigram* on Voltaire; who, when he was in England, ridiculed, in the company of the jealous Engliſh poet, Milton's allegory of *Sin and Death*——

> You are ſo witty, profligate, and thin,
> At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin.

From the following paſſage in the poetical Dedication of his *Sea-piece* to Voltaire, it ſeems that his extemporaneous reproof, if it muſt be extemporaneous, for what few will now affirm Voltaire to have deſerved any reproof, wasſomething longer than a diſtich, and ſomething more *gentle* than the diſtich juſt quoted.

> No ſtranger, Sir, though born in foreign climes.
> On *Dorſet* downs, when Milton's page,
> With Sin and Death provok'd thy rage,
> Thy rage provok'd, who ſooth'd with *gentle* rhymes?

By *Dorset downs* he probably meant Mr. Dodington's ſeat. In Pitt's Poems is *An Epiſtle to Dr. Edward Young, at Eastbury in Dorsetshire, on the Review at Sarum*, 1722.

> While with your Dodington retired you ſit,
> Charm'd with his flowing Burgundy and wit, &c.

Thomſon, in his Autumn, addreſſing Mr. Dodington, calls his ſeat the ſeat of the Muſes,

> Where, in the ſecret bower and winding walk,
> For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.

The praiſes Thomſon beſtows but a few lines before on Philips, the ſecond

> Who nobly durſt, in rhyme-unfettered verſe,
> With Britiſh freedom ſing the Britiſh ſong;

added to Thomſon's example and ſucceſs, might perhaps induce Young, as we ſhall ſee preſently, to write his great work without rhyme.

In 1734 he publiſhed *The foreign Address, or the best Argument for Peace; occasioned by the British Fleet and the Posture of Affairs. Written in the Character of a Sailor.* It is not to be found in the author's four volumes.

He now appears to have given up all hopes of overtaking Pindar, and perhaps at laſt reſolved to turn his ambition to ſome original ſpecies of poetry. This poem concludes with a formal farewel to Ode, which few of Young's readers will regret:

> My ſhell which Clio gave, which *Kings applaud*,
> Which Europe's bleeding Genius call'd abroad,
> Adieu!

In a ſpecies of poetry altogether his own he next tried his ſkill, and ſucceeded.

Of his wife he was deprived in 1741. She had loſt in her life time, at ſeventeen years of age, an amiable daughter, who was juſt married to Mr. Temple, ſon of Lord Palmerſton. This was one of her three children by Colonel Lee. Mr. Temple did not long remain after his wife*. Mr. and Mrs. Temple have always been conſidered as Philander and Narciſſa. If they were, they did not die long before Lady E. Young. How ſuddenly and how nearly together the deaths of the three perſons whom he laments, happened, none who has read the *Night Thoughts*, and who has not read them, needs to be informed.

> Inſatiate Archer! could not one ſuffice?
> Thy ſhaft flew thrice; and thrice my peace was ſlain!
> And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.

To the ſorrow Young felt at his loſſes we are indebted for theſe poems. There is a pleaſure ſure in ſadneſs which mourners only know. Of theſe poems the two or three firſt have been peruſed perhaps more eagerly, and more frequently, than the reſt. When he got as far as the fourth or fifth, his grief was naturally either diminiſhed or exhauſted. We find the ſame religion, the ſame piety; but we hear leſs of Philander and of Narciſſa.

Mrs. Temple died *in her bridal hour* at Nice. Young, with the reſt of her family, accompanied her to the continent.

> I flew, I ſnatch'd her from the rigid North,
> And bore her nearer to the ſun.

* *The Iriſh Peerage, if authentic, in the account of Lord Palmerſton's family, ſomewhat confuſes this buſineſs; but I take what I have related to be the fact.*

The poet seems to dwell with more melancholy on the deaths of Philander and Narcissa, than of his wife. But it is only for this reason. He who runs and reads may remember, that in the *Night thoughts* Philander and Narcissa are often mentioned, and often lamented. To recollect lamentations over the author's wife, the memory must have been charged with distinct passages. This Lady brought him one child, Frederick, now living, to whom the Prince of Wales was godfather.

That domestic grief is, in the first instance, to be thanked for these ornaments to our language it is impossible to deny. Nor would it be common hardiness to contend, that worldly discontent had no hand in these joint productions of poetry and piety. Yet am I by no means sure that, at any rate, we should not have had something of the same colour from Young's pencil, notwithstanding the liveliness of his satires. In so long a life, causes for discontent and occasions for grief must have occurred. It is not clear to me that his Muse was not sitting upon the watch for the first which happened. *Night Thoughts* were not uncommon to her, even when first she visited the poet, and at a time when he himself was remarkable neither for gravity nor gloominess. In his *Last Day*, almost his earliest poem, he calls her the *Melancholy Maid.*

> ——whom dismal scenes delight,
> Frequent at tombs and in the realms of Night.

In the prayer which concludes the second book of the same poem, he says——

> —Oh! permit the gloom of solemn night
> To sacred thought may forcibly invite.
> Oh! how divine to tread the milky way,
> To the bright palace of Eternal Day!

When Young was writing a tragedy, Grafton is said by Spence to have sent him a human skull, with a candle in it, as a lamp; and the poet is reported to have used it.

What he calls "The *true* estimate of Human Life," which has already been mentioned, exhibits only the wrong side of the tapestry; and being asked why he did not show the right, he is said to have replied he could not—though by others it has been told me that this was finished,

but that a Lady's monkey tore it in pieces before there exiſted any copy.

Still, is it altogether fair to dreſs up the poet for the man, and to bring the gloomineſs of the *Night Thoughts* to prove the gloomineſs of Young, and to ſhew that his genius, like the genius of Swift, was in ſome meaſure the ſullen inſpiration of diſcontent?

From them who anſwer in the affirmative it ſhould not be concealed that, though *Invisibilia non decipiunt* was inſcribed upon a deception in Young's grounds, and *Ambulantes in horto audierunt vocem Dei* on a building in his garden, his pariſh was indebted to the good humour of the author of the *Night Thoughts* for an aſſembly and a bowling-green.

Whether you think with me, I know not; but the famous *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* always appeared to me to ſavour more of female weakneſs than of manly reaſon. He that has too much feeling to ſpeak ill of the dead, who, if they cannot defend themſelves, are at leaſt ignorant of his abuſe, will not heſitate by the moſt wanton calumny to deſtroy the quiet, the reputation, the fortune of the living. Cenſure is not heard beneath the tomb any more than praiſe. *De mortuis nil nisi verum—De vivis nil nisi bonum*—would approach perhaps much nearer to good ſenſe. After all, the few handfuls of remaining duſt which once compoſed the body of the author of the *Night Thoughts*, feel not much concern whether Young paſſes now for a man of ſorrow, or for a *fellow of infinite jest.* To this favour muſt come the whole family of Yorick.—His immortal part, wherever that now dwells, is ſtill leſs ſolicitous on this head.

But to a ſon of worth and ſenſibility it is of ſome little conſequence whether contemporaries believe, and poſterity be taught to believe, that his debauched and reprobate life caſt a Stygian gloom over the evening of his father's days, ſaved him the trouble of feigning a character completely deteſtable, and ſucceeded at laſt in bringing his *gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.*

The humanity of the world, little ſatisfied with inventing perhaps a melancholy diſpoſition for the father, proceeds next to invent an argument in ſupport of their invention, and chooſes that Lorenzo ſhould be Young's own ſon. The Biographia and every account of Young pretty roundly aſſert this to be the fact; of the abſolute impoſſibility of

which the Biographia itſelf, in particular dates, contains undeniable evidence. Readers I know there are of a ſtrange turn of mind, who will hereafter peruſe the *Night Thoughts* with leſs ſatisfaction; who will wiſh they had ſtill been deceived; who will quarrel with me for diſcovering that no ſuch character as their Lorenzo ever yet diſgraced human nature, or broke a father's heart. Yet would theſe admirers of the ſublime and terrible be offended, ſhould you ſet them down for cruel and for ſavage.

Of this report, inhuman to the ſurviving ſon, if it be untrue, in proportion as the character of Lorenzo is diabolical, where are we to find the proofs? Perhaps it is clear from the poems.

From the firſt line to the laſt of the *Night Thoughts*, no one expreſſion can be diſcovered which betrays any thing like the father. In the ſecond *Night* I find an expreſſion which betrays ſomething elſe; that Lorenzo was his friend; one, it is poſſible, of his former companions; one of the Duke of Wharton's ſet. The Poet ſtyles him *gay Friend*—an appellation not very natural from a pious incenſed father to ſuch a being as he paints Lorenzo, and that being his ſon.

But let us ſee how he has ſketched this dreadful portrait, from the ſight of ſome of whoſe features the artiſt himſelf muſt have turned away with horror.—A ſubject more ſhocking, if his only child really ſat to him, than the crucifixion of Michael Angelo; upon the horrid ſtory told of which, Young compoſed a ſhort Poem of fourteen lines in the early part of life, which he did not think deſerved to be republiſhed.

In the firſt *Night*, the addreſs to the Poet's ſuppoſed ſon is,

> Lorenzo, Fortune makes her court to thee.

In the fifth *Night*—

> And burns Lorenzo ſtill for the ſublime
> Of life? to hang his airy neſt on high?

Is this a picture of the ſon of the rector of Welwyn?

Eighth *Night*—

> In foreign realms (for thou haſt travelled far)—

which even now does not apply to his ſon.

In *Night* five—

So wept Lorenzo fair Clariſſa's fate,
Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes,
And died to give him, orphan'd in his birth!

At the beginning of the fifth *Night* we find—

Lorenzo, to recriminate is juſt.
I grant the man is vain who writes for praiſe.

But, to cut ſhort all enquiry; if any one of theſe paſſages, if any paſſage in the poems be applicable, my friend ſhall paſs for Lorenzo. The ſon of the author of the *Night Thoughts* was not old enough, when they were written, to recriminate, or to be a father. The *Night Thoughts* were begun immediately after the mournful events of 1741. The firſt *Nights* appear in the books of the company of Stationers, as the property of Robert Dodſley, in 1742. The Preface to *Night* Seven is dated July the 7th, 1744. The marriage, in conſequence of which the ſuppoſed Lorenzo was born, happened in May 1731. Young's child was not born till June 1733. In 1741 this Lorenzo, this finiſhed infidel, this *father*, to whoſe education Vice had for ſome years put the laſt hand, was only *eight* years old.

An anecdote of this cruel ſort, ſo open to contradiction, ſo impoſſible to be true, who could propagate? Thus eaſily are blaſted the reputations of the living and of the dead.

Who then was Lorenzo? exclaim the readers I have mentioned. If he was not his ſon, which would have been finely terrible, was he not his nephew, his couſin?

Theſe are queſtions which I do not pretend to anſwer. For the ſake of human nature, I could wiſh Lorenzo to have been only the creation of the Poet's fancy—no more than the Quintius of Anti Lucretius, *quo nomine*, ſays Polignac, *quemvis Atheum intellige*. That this was the caſe, many expreſſions in the *Night Thoughts* would ſeem to prove, did not a paſſage in *Night* Eight appear to ſhew that he had ſomebody in his eye for the ground-work at leaſt of the painting. Lovelace or Lorenzo may be feigned characters; but a writer does not feign a name of which he only gives the initial letter.

Tell not Caliſta. She will laugh thee dead,
Or ſend thee to her hermitage with L—.

The Biographia, not ſatisfied with pointing out the ſon of Young, in that ſon's life-time, as his father's Lorenzo, travels out of its way into the hiſtory of the ſon, and tells of his having been forbidden his college at Oxford for miſbehaviour. How ſuch anecdotes, were they true, tend to illuſtrate the life of Young, it is not eaſy to diſcover. If the ſon of the author of the *Night Thoughts* was indeed forbidden his college for a time, at one of our Univerſities, the author of *Paradise Lost* is by ſome ſuppoſed to have been diſgracefully ejected from the other. From juvenile follies who is free? But, whatever the Biographia chooſes to relate, the ſon of Young experienced no diſmiſſion from his college either laſting or temporary.

Yet, were nature to indulge him with a ſecond youth, and to leave him at the ſame time the experience of that which is paſt, he would probably ſpend it differently—who would not?—he would certainly be the occaſion of leſs uneaſineſs to his father. But, from the ſame experience, he would as certainly, in the ſame caſe, be treated differently by his father.

Young was a poet; poets, with reverence be it ſpoken, do not make the beſt parents. Fancy and imagination ſeldem deign to ſtoop from their heights; always ſtoop unwillingly to the low level of common duties. Aloof from vulgar life, they purſue their rapid flight beyond the ken of mortals, and deſcend not to earth but when obliged by neceſſity. The proſe of ordinary occurrences is beneath the dignity of poetry.

He who is connected with the Author of the *Night Thoughts* only by veneration for the Poet and the Chriſtian, may be allowed to obſerve, that Young is one of thoſe concerning whom, as you remark in your account of Addiſon, it is proper rather to ſay "nothing that is falſe than all that is true."

But the ſon of Young would almoſt ſooner, I know, paſs for a Lorenzo, than ſee himſelf vindicated, at the expence of his father's memory, from follies which, if it was blameable in a boy to have committed them, it is ſurely praiſeworthy in a man to lament, and certainly not only unneceſſary, but cruel in a biographer to record.

Of the *Night Thoughts*, notwithſtanding their author's profeſſed retirement, all are inſcribed to great or to growing names. He had not yet weaned himſelf from Earls and Dukes, from Speakers of the Houſe of Commons, Lords

Commiſſioners of the Treaſury, and Chancellors of the Exchequer. In *Night* Eight the politician plainly betrays himſelf—

> Think no poſt needful that demands a knave.
> When late our civil helm was ſhifting hands,
> So P— thought: think better if you can.

Yet it muſt be confeſſed, that at the concluſion of *Night* Nine, weary perhaps of courting earthly patrons, he tells his ſoul,

> Henceforth
> Thy *patron* be, whoſe diadem has dropt
> Yon gems of heaven; Eternity thy prize;
> And leave the racers of the world their own.

The Fourth *Night* was addreſſed by "a much indebted Muſe" to the Honourable Mr. Yorke, now Lord Hardwicke; who meant to have laid the Muſe under ſtill greater obligations, by the living of Shenfield in Eſſex, if it had become vacant.

The Firſt *Night* concludes with this paſſage——

> Dark, though not blind, like thee, Meonides;
> Or Milton, thee. Ah! could I reach your ſtrain;
> Or his who made Meonides our own!
> Man too he ſung. Immortal man I ſing.
> Oh had he preſt his theme, purſued the track
> Which opens out of darkneſs into day!
> Oh had he mounted on his wing of fire,
> Soar'd, where I ſink, and ſung immortal man—
> How had it blaſt mankind, and reſcued me!

To the author of theſe lines was dedicated, in 1756, the firſt volume of an *Eſſay on the Writings and Genius of Pope*, which attempted, whether juſtly or not, to pluck from Pope his *Wing of Fire*, and to reduce him to a rank at leaſt one degree lower than the firſt claſs of Engliſh poets. If Young accepted and approved the dedication, he countenanced this attack upon the fame of him whom he invokes as his Muſe.

Part of "paper-ſparing" Pope's Third Book of the *Odyſſey*, depoſited in the Muſeum, is written upon the back of a Letter ſigned *E. Young*, which is clearly the handwriting of our Young. The Letter, dated only May the 2d, ſeems obſcure; but there can be little doubt that the friendſhip he requeſts was a literary one, and that he had

the higheſt literary opinion of Pope. The requeſt was a prologue, I am told.

" Dear Sir, May the 2d.

" Having been often from home, I know not if you have done me the favour of calling on me. But, be that as it will, I much want that inſtance of your friendſhip I mentioned in my laſt; a friendſhip I am very ſenſible I can receive from no one but yourſelf. I ſhould not urge this thing ſo much but for very particular reaſons; nor can you be at a loſs to conceive how a *trifle of this nature* may be of ſerious moment to me; and while I am in hopes of the great advantage of your advice about it, I ſhall not be ſo abſurd as to make any further ſtep without it. I know you are much engaged, and only hope to hear of you at your entire leiſure.

" I am, Sir, your moſt faithful,
and obedient ſervant,
E. YOUNG.

Nay, even after Pope's death, he ſays, in *Night* Seven:

Pope, who could'ſt make immortals, art thou dead?

Either the *Eſſay*, then, was dedicated to a patron who diſapproved its doctrine, which I have been told by the author was not the caſe; or Young, in his old age, bartered for a dedication an opinion entertained of his friend through all that part of life when he muſt have been beſt able to form opinions.

From this account of Young, two or three ſhort paſſages, which ſtand almoſt together in *Night* Four, ſhould not be excluded. They afford a picture, by his own hand, from the ſtudy of which my readers may chooſe to form their own opinion of the features of his mind, and the complexion of his life.

Ah me! the dire effect
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long;
Of old ſo gracious (and let that ſuffice),
My very master knows me not.

*

I've been ſo long remember'd, I forgot.

*

When in his courtier's ears I'm pour my plaint,
They drink it as the Nectar of the Great;
And ſqueeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.

Twice told the period ſpent on ſtubborn Troy,
Court-favour, yet untaken, I *beſiege.*

If this ſong lives, Poſterity ſhall know,
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late:
Nor on his ſubtle death-bed plann'd his ſcheme
For future vacancies in church or ſtate.

Deduct from the writer's age *twice told the period ſpent on ſtubborn Troy*, and you will ſtill leave him more than 40 when he ſat down to the miſerable ſiege of *court* favour. He has before told us

"A fool at 40 is a fool indeed."

After all, the ſiege ſeems to have been raiſed only in conſequence of what the General thought his *death bed.*

By theſe extraordinary Poems, written after he was ſixty, of which I have been led to ſay ſo much, I hope, by the wiſh of doing juſtice to the living and the dead, it was the deſire of Young to be principally known. He entitled the four volumes which he publiſhed himſelf, *The Works of the Author of the Night Thoughts.* While it is remembered that from theſe he excluded many of his writings, let it not be forgotten that the rejected pieces contained nothing prejudicial to the cauſe of virtue, or of religion. Were every thing that Young ever wrote to be publiſhed, he would only appear perhaps in a leſs reſpectable light as a poet, and more deſpicable as a dedicator: he would not paſs for a worſe chriſtian, or for a worſe man.—This enviable praiſe is due to Young. Can it be claimed by every writer? His dedications, after all, he had perhaps no right to ſuppreſs. They all, I believe, ſpeak, not a little to the credit of his gratitude, of favours received; and I know not whether the author, who has once ſolemnly printed an acknowledgment of a favour, ſhould not always print it.

Is it to the credit or to the diſcredit of Young, as a poet, that of his *Night Thoughts* the *French* are particularly fond?

Of the *Epitaph on Lord Aubrey Beauclerk*, dated 1740, all I know is, that I find it in the late body of Engliſh Poetry, and that I am ſorry to find it there.

Notwithſtanding the farewell which he ſeemed to have taken in the *Night Thoughts*, of every thing which bore the leaſt reſemblance to ambition, he dipped again in politics.

In 1745 he wrote *Reflections on the public Situation of the Kingdom, addressed to the Duke of Newcastle*—indignant, as it appears, to behold

> —a Pope-bred Princeling crawl afhore,
> And whiftle cut-throats, with thofe fwords that fcrap'd
> Their barren rocks for wretched fuftenance,
> To cut his paffage to the Britifh throne.

This political poem might be called a *Night Thought*. Indeed it was originally printed as the concluſion of the *Night Thoughts*, though he did not gather it with his other works.

Prefixed to the ſecond edition of Howe's *Devout Meditations* is a Letter from Young, dated January 19, 1752, addreſſed to Archibald Macauly, Eſq. thanking him for the book, which he ſays "he ſhall never lay far out of his reach; for a greater demonſtration of a ſound head and a ſincere heart he never ſaw."

In 1753, when *The Brothers* had lain by him above thirty years, it appeared upon the ſtage. If any part of his fortune had been acquired by ſervility of adulation, he now determined to deduct from it no inconſiderable ſum, as a gift to the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel. To this ſum he hoped the profits of *The Brothers* would amount. In his calculation he was deceived; but by the bad ſucceſs of his play the Society was not a loſer. The author made up the ſum he originally intended, which was a thouſand pounds, from his own pocket.

The next performance which he printed was a proſe publication, entitled, *The Centaur not fabulous, in six Letters to a Friend on the Life in Vogue*. The concluſion is dated November 29, 1754. In the third Letter is deſcribed the death-bed of the *gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont*. His laſt words were——"My principles have poiſoned my friend, my extravagance has beggared my boy, my unkindneſs has murdered my wife!" Either Altamont and Lorenzo were the twin production of fancy, or Young was unlucky enough to know two characters who bore no little reſemblance to each other in perfection of wickedneſs. Report has been accuſtomed to call Altamont Lord Euſton.

The Old Man's Relapſe, occaſioned by an Epiſtle to Walpole, if it was written by Young, which I much doubt, muſt have been written very late in life. It has been ſeen,

I am told, in a Miſcellany publiſhed thirty years before his death.—In 1758, he exhibited *The Old Man's Relapse* in more than words, by again becoming a dedicator, and publiſhing a ſermon addreſſed to the King.

The lively Letter in proſe on *Original Compoſition*, addreſſed to Richardſon the author of *Clariſſa*, appeared in 1759. Though he deſpairs "of breaking through the frozen obſtructions of age and care's incumbent cloud, into that flow of thought and brightneſs of expreſſion which ſubjects ſo polite require;" yet it is more like the production of untamed, unbridled youth, than of jaded fourſcore. Some ſevenfold volumes put him in mind of Ovid's ſevenfold channels of the Nile at the conflagration.

——————oſtia ſeptem
Pulverulenta vocant, ſeptem ſine flumine valles.

Such leaden labours are like Lycurgus's iron money, which was ſo much leſs in value than in bulk, that it required barns for ſtrong boxes, and a yoke of oxen to draw five hundred pounds.

If there is a famine of invention in the land, we muſt travel, he ſays, like Joſeph's brethren, far for food; we muſt viſit the remote and rich antients. But an inventive genius may ſafely ſtay at home; that, like the widow's curſe, is divinely repleniſhed from within, and affords us a miraculous delight. He aſks why it ſhould ſeem altogether impoſſible, that Heaven's lateſt editions of the human mind may be the moſt correct and fair? And Jonſon, he tells us, was very learned, as Samſon was very ſtrong, to his own hurt. Blind to the nature of tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himſelf under it.

Is this "care's incumbent cloud," or "the frozen obſtructions of age?"

In this letter Pope is ſeverely cenſured for his "fall from Homer's numbers, free as air, lofty and harmonious as the ſpheres, into childiſh ſhackles and tinkling ſounds; for putting Achilles in petticoats a ſecond time;"—but we are told that the dying ſwan talked over an Epic plan with Young a few weeks before his deceaſe.

Young's chief inducement to write this letter was, as he confeſſes, that he might erect a monumental marble to the memory of an old friend. He, who employed his pious pen for almoſt the laſt time in thus doing juſtice to the exemplary death-bed of Addiſon, might probably, at the cloſe

of his own life, afford no unuſeful leſſon for the deaths of others.

In the poſtſcript he writes to Richardſon, that he will ſee in his next how far Addiſon is an original. But no other letter appears.

The few lines which ſtand in the laſt edition, as *ſent by Lord Melcombe to Dr. Young, not long before his Lordſhip's death*, were indeed ſo ſent, but were only an introduction to what was there meant by *The Muſe's latest Spark*. The poem is neceſſary, whatever may be its merit, ſince the Preface to it is already printed. Lord Melcombe called his *Tuſculum la Trappe*.

" Love thy country, wiſh it well,
Not with too intenſe a care,
'Tis enough, that, when it fell,
Thou its ruin didſt not ſhare.

Envy's cenſure, Flattery's praiſe,
With unmov'd indifference view;
Learn to tread Life's dangerous maze,
With unerring Virtue's clue.

Void of ſtrong deſire and fear,
Life's wide ocean truſt no more;
Strive thy little bark to ſteer
With the tide, but near the ſhore.

Thus prepar'd, thy ſhorten'd ſail
Shall, whene'er the winds increaſe,
Seizing each propitious gale,
Waft thee to the Port of Peace.

Keep thy conſcience from offence,
And tempeſtuous paſſions free,
So, when thou art call'd from hence,
Eaſy ſhall thy paſſage be;

Eaſy ſhall thy paſſage be,
Chearful thy allotted ſtay,
Short the account 'twixt God and thee;
Hope ſhall meet thee on the way;

Truth ſhall lead thee to the gate,
Mercy's ſelf ſhall let thee in,
Where its never-changing ſtate
Full perfection ſhall begin."

The Poem was accompanied by a Letter.

"*La Trappe*, the 27th Oct. 1761.

"Dear Sir,

"You ſeemed to like the ode I ſent you for your amuſement; I now ſend it you as a preſent. If you pleaſe to accept of it, and are willing that our friendſhip ſhould be known when we are gone, you will be pleaſed to leave this among thoſe of your own papers that may poſſibly ſee the light by a poſthumous publication. God ſend us health while we ſtay, and an eaſy journey!

"My dear Dr. Young,
Yours, moſt cordially,
MELCOMBE."

In 1762, a ſhort time before his death, Young publiſhed *Resignation*. Notwithſtanding the manner in which it was really forced from him by the world, criticiſm has treated it with no common ſeverity. If it ſhall be thought not to deſerve the higheſt praiſe, on the other ſide of fourſcore, by whom, except by Newton and by Waller, has praiſe been merited?

To Mrs. Montagu, the famous champion of Shakſpeare, I am indebted for the hiſtory of *Resignation*. Obſerving that Mrs. Boſcawen, in the midſt of her grief for the loſs of the admiral, derived conſolation from the peruſal of the *Night Thoughts*, Mrs. Montagu propoſed a viſit to the author. From converſing with Young, Mrs. Boſcawen derived ſtill further conſolation, and to that viſit ſhe and the world were indebted for this poem. It compliments Mrs. Montagu in the following lines:

Yet, write I muſt. A Lady ſues,
How ſhameful her requeſt!
My brain in labour with dull rhyme,
Her's teeming with the beſt!

And again—

A friend you have, and I the ſame,
Whoſe prudent ſoft addreſs
Will bring to life thoſe healing thoughts
Which died in your diſtreſs.

That friend, the ſpirit of my theme
Extracting for your eaſe,
Will leave to me the dreg, in thoughts
Too common; ſuch as theſe.

By the ſame Lady I am enabled to ſay, in her own words, that Young's unbounded genius appeared to greater advantage in the companion, than even in the author——that the chriſtian was in him a character ſtill more inſpired, more enraptured, more ſublime than the poet—and that, in his ordinary converſation,

—letting down the golden chain from high.
He drew his audience upward to the ſky.

Notwithſtanding Young had ſaid, in his *Conjectures on original Compoſition*, that "blank verſe is verſe unfallen, uncurſt; verſe reclaimed, reinthroned in the true language of the Gods"——notwithſtanding he adminiſtered conſolation to his own grief in this immortal language—Mrs. Boſcawen was comforted in rhyme.

While the poet and the chriſtian were applying this comfort, Young had himſelf occaſion for comfort, in conſequence of the ſudden death of Richardſon, who was printing the former part of the poem. Of Richardſon's death he ſays——

When heaven would kindly ſet us free,
And earth's enchantment end;
It takes the moſt effectual means,
And robs us of a friend.

To *Reſignation* was prefixed an Apology for its appearance: to which more credit is due than to the generality of ſuch apologies, from Young's unuſual anxiety that no more productions of his old age ſhould diſgrace his former fame. In his will, dated February 1760, he deſires of his executors, *in a particular manner*, that all his manuſcript books and writings whatever might be burned, except his book of accounts.

In September 1764 he added a kind of codicil, wherein he made it his dying intreaty to his houſekeeper, to whom he left 1000*l.* that all his manuſcripts might be deſtroyed as ſoon as he was dead, which would greatly oblige her deceaſed *friend*."

It may teach mankind the uncertainty of worldly friendſhips, to know that Young, either by ſurviving thoſe he

loved, or by out-living their affections, could only recollect the names of two friends, his houſekeeper and a hatter, to mention in his will; and it may ſerve to repreſs that teſtamentary pride, which too often ſeeks for ſounding names and titles, to be informed that the author of the *Night Thoughts* did not bluſh to leave a legacy to his "*friend* Henry Stevens, a hatter at the Temple-gate." Of theſe two remaining friends, one went before Young. But, at eighty-four "where" as he aſks in *The Centaur*, "is that world into which we were born?"

The ſame humility which marked a hatter and a houſekeeper for the *friends* of the author of the *Night Thoughts*, had before beſtowed the ſame title on his footman, in an epitaph in his *Church-yard* upon James Barker, dated 1749; which I am glad to find in the late collection of his works.

Young and his houſekeeper were ridiculed, with more ill nature than wit, in a kind of novel publiſhed by Kidgell in 1755, called *The Card*, under the names of Dr. Elwes and Mrs. Fuſby.

In April 1765, at an age to which few attain, a period was put to the life of Young.

He had performed no duty for the laſt three or four years of his life, but he retained his intellects to the laſt.

Much is told in the *Biographia*, which I know not to have been true, of the manner of his burial—of the maſter and children of a charity-ſchool, which he founded in his pariſh, who neglected to attend their benefactor's corpſe; and of a bell which was not cauſed to toll ſo often as upon thoſe occaſions bells uſually toll. Had that humanity, which is here laviſhed upon things of little conſequence either to the living or to the dead, been ſhewn in its proper place to the living, I ſhould have had leſs to ſay about Lorenzo. They who lament that theſe misfortunes happened to Young, forget the praiſe he beſtows upon Socrates, in the Preface to *Night* Seven, for reſenting his friend's requeſt about his funeral.

During ſome part of his life Young was abroad, but I have not been able to learn any particulars.

In his ſeventh Satire he ſays,

> When, after battle, I the field have *ſeen*
> Spread o'er with ghaſtly ſhapes which once were *men*.

And it is known that from this or from some other *field* he once wandered into the enemy's camp, with a classic in his hand, which he was reading intently; and had some difficulty to prove that he was only an absent poet and not a spy.

The curious reader of Young's life will naturally inquire to what it was owing, that, though he lived almost forty years after he took Orders, which included one whole reign uncommonly long, and part of another, he was never thought worthy of the least preferment. The author of the *Night Thoughts* ended his days upon a Living which came to him from his College without any favour, and to which he probably had an eye when he determined on the Church. To satisfy curiosity of this kind is, at this distance of time, far from easy. The parties themselves know not often, at the instant, why they are neglected, nor why they are preferred. The neglect of Young is by some ascribed to his having attached himself to the Prince of Wales, and to his having preached an offensive sermon at St. James's. It has been told me, that he had two hundred a year in the late reign. by the patronage of Walpole; and that, whenever the King was reminded of Young, the only answer was, *he has a pension.* All the light thrown on this inquiry, by the following Letter from Secker, only serves to shew at what a late period of life the author of the *Night Thoughts* solicited preferment.

"Deanery of St. Paul's July 8, 1758.

"Good Dr. Young,

"I have long wondered, that more suitable notice of your great merit hath not been taken by persons in power. But how to remedy the omission I see not. No encouragement hath ever been given me to mention things of this nature to his Majesty. And therefore, in all likelihood, the only consequence of doing it would be weakening the little influence, which else I may possibly have on some other occasions. Your fortune and your reputation set you above the need of advancement; and your sentiments, above that concern for it, on your own account, which, on that of the Public, is sincerely felt by

Your loving Brother,

THOS. CANT."

At last, at the age of fourscore, he was appointed, in 1761, Clerk of the Closet to the Princess Dowager.

One obstacle must have stood not a little in the way of that preferment after which his whole life panted. Though he took Orders, he never entirely shook off Politics. He was always the Lion of his master Milton, *pawing to get free his hinder parts*. By this conduct, if he gained some friends, he made many enemies.

Again, Young was a poet; and again, with reverence be it spoken, poets by profession do not always make the best clergymen. If the author of the *Night Thoughts* composed many sermons, he did not oblige the public with many.

Besides, in the latter part of life, Young was fond of holding himself out for a man retired from the world. But he seemed to have forgotten that the same verse which contains *oblitus meorum*, contains also *obliviscendus & illis*. The brittle chain of worldly friendship and patronage is broken as effectually, when one goes beyond the length of it, as when the other does. To the vessel which is sailing from the shore, it only appears that the shore also recedes; in life it is truly thus. He who retires from the world, will find himself, in reality, deserted as fast, if not faster, by the world. The public is not to be treated as the coxcomb treats his mistress—to be threatened with desertion, in order to increase fondness.

Young seems to have been taken at his word. Notwithstanding his frequent complaints of being neglected, no hand was reached out to pull him from that retirement of which he declared himself enamoured. Alexander assigned no palace for the residence of Diogenes, who boasted his surly satisfaction with his tub.

Of the domestic manners and petty habits of the author of the *Night Thoughts*, I hoped to have given you an account from the best authority;—but who shall dare to say, To-morrow I will be wise or virtuous, or to-morrow I will do a particular thing? Upon enquiring for his housekeeper, I learned that she was buried two days before I reached the town of her abode.

In a Letter from Tscharner, a noble foreigner, to Count Haller, Tscharner says, he has lately spent four days with Young at Welwyn, where the author tastes all the ease and pleasure mankind can desire. "Every thing about him shews the man, each individual being placed by rule. All

is neat without art. He is very pleaſant in converſation, and extremely polite."

This, and more, may poſſibly be true; but Tſcharner's was a firſt viſit, a viſit of curioſity and admiration, and a viſit which the author expected.

Of Edward Young an anecdote which wanders among readers is not true, that he was Fielding's *Parson Adams*. The original of that famous painting was William Young. He too was a clergyman. He ſupported an uncomfortable exiſtence by tranſlating for the bookſellers from Greek; and, if he was not his own friend, was at leaſt no man's enemy. Yet the facility with which this report has gained belief in the world, argues, were it not ſufficiently known, that the author of the *Night Thoughts* bore ſome reſemblance to *Adams*.

The attention Young beſtowed upon the peruſal of books is not unworthy imitation. When any paſſage pleaſed him, he appears to have folded down the leaf. On theſe paſſages he beſtowed a ſecond reading. But the labours of man are too frequently vain. Before he returned, a ſecond time, to much of what he had once approved, he died. Many of his books, which I have ſeen, are by thoſe notes of approbation ſo ſwelled beyond their real bulk, that they will not ſhut.

> What though we wade in wealth, or ſoar in fame!
> Earth's higheſt ſtation ends in *Here he lies!*
> And *duſt to duſt* concludes her nobleſt ſong!

The author of theſe lines is not without his *hic jacet*.

By the good ſenſe of his ſon, it contains none of that praiſe which no marble can make the bad or the fooliſh merit; which, without the direction of a ſtone or a turf, will find its way, ſooner or later, to the deſerving.

M. S.
Optimi parentis
Edwardi Young, LL. D.
Hujus Eccleſiæ rect.
Et Elizabethæ
fæm. prænob.
Conjugis ejus amantiſſimæ
Pio & gratiſſimo animo
Hoc marmor poſuit
F. Y.
Filius ſuperſtes.

Is it not ſtrange that the author of the *Night Thoughts* has inſcribed no monument to the memory of his lamented wife? Yet what marble will endure as long as the poems?

Such, my good friend, is the account I have been able to collect of Young. That it may be long before any thing like what I have juſt tranſcribed be neceſſary for you, is the ſincere wiſh of,

Dear Sir,

Your greatly obliged Friend,

HERBERT CROFT, Jun.

Lincoln's Inn,
Sept. 1780.

P. S. This account of Young was ſeen by you in manuſcript you know, Sir; and, though I could not prevail on you to make any alterations, you inſiſted on ſtriking out one paſſage only becauſe it ſaid, that, if I did not wiſh you to live long for your ſake, I did for the ſake of myſelf and of the world. But this poſtſcript you will not ſee before it is printed; and I will ſay here, in ſpite of you, how I feel myſelf honoured and bettered by your friendſhip—and that, if I do credit to the church, after which I always longed, and for which I am now going to give in exchange the bar, though not at ſo late a period of life as Young took Orders, it will be owing, in no ſmall meaſure, to my having had the happineſs of calling the author of *The Rambler* my friend.

H. C."

Oxford,
Sept. 1782.

OF Young's Poems it is difficult to give any general character; for he has no uniformity of manner: one of his pieces has no great reſemblance to another. He began to write early, and continued long; and at different times had different modes of poetical excellence in view. His numbers are ſometimes ſmooth, and ſometimes rugged; his ſtyle is ſometimes concatenated, and ſometimes abrupt; ſometimes diffuſive, and ſometimes conciſe. His plan ſeems to have ſtarted in his mind at the preſent moment, and his thoughts appear the effects of chance, ſometimes adverſe, and ſometimes lucky, with very little operation of judgment.

He was not one of the writers whom experience improves, and who obſerving their own faults become gradu-

ally correct. His Poem on the *Last Day*, his firſt great performance, has an equability and propriety, which he afterwards either never endeavoured or never attained. Many paragraphs are noble, and few are mean, yet the whole is languid; the plan is too much extended, and a ſucceſſion of images divides and weakens the general conception; but the great reaſon why the reader is diſappointed is, that the thought of the Last Day makes every man more than poetical, by ſpreading over his mind a general obſcurity of ſacred horror, that oppreſſes diſtinction, and diſdains expreſſion.

His ſtory of *Jane Grey* was never popular. It is written with elegance enough, but *Jane* is too heroic to be pitied.

The *Univerſal Paſſion* is indeed a very great performance. It is ſaid to be a ſeries of Epigrams: but if it be, it is what the author intended: his endeavour was at the production of ſtriking diſtichs and pointed ſentences; and his diſtichs have the weight of ſolid ſentiment, and his points the ſharpneſs of reſiſtleſs truth. His characters are often ſelected with diſcernment, and drawn with nicety; his illuſtrations are often happy, and his reflections often juſt. His ſpecies of ſatire is between thoſe of Horace and of Juvenal; he has the gaiety of Horace without his laxity of numbers, and the morality of Juvenal with greater variation of images. He plays, indeed, only on the ſurface of life; he never penetrates the receſſes of the mind, and therefore the whole power of his poetry is exhauſted by a ſingle peruſal; his conceits pleaſe only when they ſurpriſe.

To tranſlate he never condeſcended, unleſs his *Paraphraſe on Job* may be conſidered as a verſion; in which he has not, I think, been unſucceſsful: he indeed favoured himſelf, by chuſing thoſe parts which moſt eaſily admit the ornaments of Engliſh poetry.

He had leaſt ſucceſs in his lyric attempts, in which he ſeems to have been under ſome malignant influence; he is always labouring to be great, and at laſt is only turgid.

In his *Night Thoughts* he has exhibited a very wide diſplay of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and ſtriking alluſions, a wilderneſs of thought, in which the fertility of fancy ſcatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verſe could not be changed for rhyme but with diſadvantage. The wild diffuſion of the ſentiments, and the di-

greſſive ſallies of imagination, would have been compreſſed and reſtrained by confinement to rhyme. The excellence of this work is not exactneſs, but copiouſneſs; particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole, and in the whole there is a magnificence like that aſcribed to Chineſe Plantation, the magnificence of vaſt extent and endleſs diverſity.

His laſt poem was the *Reſignation*; in which he made, as he was accuſtomed, an experiment of a new mode of writing, and ſucceeded better than in his *Ocean* or his *Merchant*. It was very falſely repreſented as a proof of decaying faculties. There is Young in every ſtanza, ſuch as he often was in his higheſt vigour.

His Tragedies not making part of the Collection, I had forgotten, till Mr. Stevens recalled them to my thoughts by remarking, that he ſeemed to have one favourite cataſtrophe, as his three Plays all concluded with laviſh ſuicide; a method by which, as Dryden remarked, a poet eaſily rids his ſcene of perſons whom he wants not to keep alive. In *Buſiris* there are the greateſt ebullitions of imagination; but the pride of Buſiris is ſuch as no other man can have, and the whole is too remote from known life to raiſe either grief, terror, or indignation. The *Revenge* approaches much nearer to human practices and manners, and therefore keeps poſſeſſion of the ſtage: the firſt deſign ſeems ſuggeſted by *Othello*; but the reflections, the incidents, and the diction, are original. The moral obſervations are ſo introduced, and ſo expreſſed, as to have all the novelty that can be required. Of *The Brothers* I may be allowed to ſay nothing, ſince nothing was ever ſaid of it by the Public.

It muſt be allowed of Young's poetry, that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy or ſelection. When he lays hold of an illuſtration, he purſues it beyond expectation, ſometimes happily, as in his parallel of *Quickſilver* with *Pleaſure*, which I have heard repeated with approbation by a Lady, of whoſe praiſe he would have been juſtly proud, and which is very ingenious, very ſubtle, and almoſt exact; but ſometimes he is leſs lucky, as when, in his *Night Thoughts*, having it dropped into his mind, that the orbs, flaming in ſpace, might be called the *cluſter* of Creation, he thinks on a cluſter of grapes, and ſays, that they all hang on the great Vine, drinking the "nectareous juice of immortal Life."

His conceits are ſometimes yet leſs valuable; in the *Laſt Day*, he hopes to illuſtrate the re-aſſembly of the atoms that compoſe the human body at the *Trump of Doom*, by the collection of bees into a ſwarm at the tinkling of a pan.

The Prophet ſays of Tyre, that *her Merchants are Princes*; Young ſays of Tyre in his *Merchant*,

Her merchants Princes, and each *deck a throne*.

Let burleſque try to go beyond him.

He has the trick of joining the turgid and familiar: to buy the alliance of Britain, *Climes were paid down*. Antitheſis is his favourite. *They for kindness hate*; and *because she's right, she's ever in the wrong*.

His verſification is his own, neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any reſemblance to thoſe of former writers: he picks up no hemiſtichs, he copies no favourite expreſſions; he ſeems to have laid up no ſtores of thought or diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous ſuggeſtions of the preſent moment. Yet I have reaſon to believe that, when once he had formed a new deſign, he then laboured it with very patient induſtry, and that he compoſed with great labour, and frequent reviſions.

His verſes are formed by no certain model; for he is no more like himſelf in his different productions than he is like others. He ſeems never to have ſtudied proſody, nor to have had any direction but from his own ear. But, with all his defects, he was a man of genius and a poet.

MALLET.

OF DAVID MALLET, having no written memorial, I am able to give no other account than ſuch as is ſupplied by the unauthoriſed loquacity of common fame, and a very ſlight perſonal knowledge.

He was by his original one of the Macgregors, a clan that became, about ſixty years ago, under the conduct of Robin Roy, ſo formidable and ſo infamous for violence and robbery, that the name was annulled by a legal abolition; and when they were all to denominate themſelves anew, the father, I ſuppoſe, of this author called himſelf Malloch.

David Malloch was, by the penury of his parents, compelled to be *janitor* of the High School at Edinburgh; a mean office, of which he did not afterwards delight to hear. But he ſurmounted the diſadvantages of his birth and fortune; for when the Duke of Montroſe applied to the College of Edinburgh for a tutor to educate his ſons, Malloch was recommended; and I never heard that he diſhonoured his credentials.

When his pupils were ſent to ſee the world, they were entruſted to his care; and having conducted them round the common circle of modiſh travels, he returned with them to London, where, by the influence of the family in which he reſided, he naturally gained admiſſion to many perſons of the higheſt rank, and the higheſt character, to wits, nobles, and ſtateſmen.

Of his works, I know not whether I can trace the ſeries. His firſt production was *William and Margaret**; of which, though it contains nothing very ſtriking or difficult, he has been envied the reputation; and plagiariſm has been boldly charged, but never proved.

* Mallet's *William and Margaret* was printed in Aaron Hill's *Plain Dealer*, No. 36, July 24, 1724. In its original ſtate it was very different from what it is in the laſt edition of his works.

Not long afterwards he publiſhed the *Excurſion* (1728); a deſultory and capricious view of ſuch ſcenes of Nature as his fancy led him, or his knowledge enabled him, to deſcribe. It is not devoid of poetical ſpirit. Many of the images are ſtriking, and many of the paragraphs are elegant. The caſt of diction ſeems to be copied from Thomſon, whoſe *Seaſons* were then in their full bloſſom of reputation. He has Thomſon's beauties and his faults.

His poem on *Verbal Criticiſm* (1733) was written to pay court to Pope, on a ſubject which he either did not underſtand or willingly miſrepreſented; and is little more than an improvement, or rather expanſion, of a fragment which Pope printed in a Miſcellany long before he engrafted it into a regular poem. There is in this piece more pertneſs than wit, and more confidence than knowledge. The verſification is tolerable, nor can criticiſm allow it a higher praiſe.

His firſt tragedy was *Eurydice*, acted at Drury-Lane in 1731; of which I know not the reception nor the merit, but have heard it mentioned as a mean performance. He was not then too high to accept a Prologue and Epilogue from Aaron Hill, neither of which can be much commended.

Having cleared his tongue from his native pronunciation, ſo as to be no longer diſtinguiſhed as a Scot, he ſeems inclined to diſencumber himſelf from all adherences of his original, and took upon him to change his name from Scotch *Malloch* to Engliſh *Mallet*, without any imaginable reaſon of preference which the eye or ear can diſcover. What other proofs he gave of diſreſpect to his native country I know not; but it was remarked of him, that he was the only Scot whom Scotchmen did not commend.

About this time Pope, whom he viſited familiarly, publiſhed his *Eſſay on Man*, but concealed the author; and when Mallet entered one day, Pope aſked him ſlightly what there was new. Mallet told him, that the neweſt piece was ſomething called an *Eſſay on Man*, which he had inſpected idly; and ſeeing the utter inability of the author, who had neither ſkill in writing nor knowledge of his ſubject, had toſſed it away. Pope, to puniſh his ſelf-conceit, told him the ſecret.

A new edition of the works of Bacon being prepared (1740) for the preſs, Mallet was employed to preſix a Life, which he has written with elegance, perhaps with ſome affectation; but with ſo much more knowledge of hiſtory

than of ſcience, that when he afterwards undertook the Life of Marlborough, Warburton remarked, that he might perhaps forget that Marlborough was a general, as he had forgotten that Bacon was a philoſopher.

When the Prince of Wales was driven from the palace, and, ſetting himſelf at the head of the oppoſition, kept a ſeparate Court, he endeavoured to increaſe his popularity by the patronage of literature, and made Mallet his under-ſecretary, with a ſalary of two hundred pounds a year: Thomſon likewiſe had a penſion; and they were aſſociated in the compoſition of the Maſque of *Alfred*, which in its original ſtate was played at Cliefden in 1740; it was afterwards almoſt wholly changed by Mallet, and brought upon the ſtage at Drury-Lane in 1751, but with no great ſucceſs.

Mallet, in a familiar converſation with Garrick, diſcourſing of the diligence which he was then exerting upon the Life of *Marlborough*, let him know that in the ſeries of great men, quickly to be exhibited, he ſhould *find a nich* for the hero of the theatre. Garrick profeſſed to wonder by what artifice he could be introduced; but Mallet let him know, that, by a dexterous anticipation, he ſhould fix him in a conſpicuous place. "Mr. Mallet," ſays Garrick, in his gratitude of exultation, "have you left off to write for the ſtage?" Mallet then confeſſed that he had a drama in his hands. Garrick promiſed to act it; and *Alfred* was produced.

The long retardation of the Life of the Duke of Marlborough ſhews, with ſtrong conviction, how little confidence can be placed in poſthumous renown. When he died, it was ſoon determined that his ſtory ſhould be delivered to poſterity; and the papers ſuppoſed to contain the neceſſary information were delivered to the lord Moleſworth, who had been his favourite in Flanders. When Moleſworth died, the ſame papers were transferred with the ſame deſign to Sir Richard Steele, who in ſome of his exigences put them in pawn. They then remained with the old ducheſs, who in her will aſſigned the taſk to Glover and Mallet, with a reward of a thouſand pounds, and a prohibition to inſert any verſes. Glover rejected, I ſuppoſe, with diſdain the legacy, and devolved the whole work upon Mallet; who had from the late Duke of Marlborough a penſion to promote his induſtry, and who talked of the diſcoveries which he made; but left not, when he died, any hiſtorical labours behind him.

While he was in the Prince's ſervice he publiſhed *Muſtapha*, with a Prologue by Thomſon, not mean, but far inferior to that which he had received from Mallet for *Agamemnon*. The Epilogue, ſaid to be written by a friend, was compoſed in haſte by Mallet, in the place of one promiſed, which was never given. This tragedy was dedicated to the Prince his maſter. It was acted at Drury-Lane, in 1739, and was well received, but was never revived.

In 1740, he produced, as has been already mentioned, the Maſque of *Alfred*, in conjunction with Thomſon.

For ſometime afterwards he lay at reſt. After a long interval, his next work was *Amyntor and Theodora* (1747), a long ſtory in blank verſe; in which it cannot be denied that there is copiouſneſs and elegance of language, vigour of ſentiment, and imagery well adapted to take poſſeſſion of the fancy. But it is blank verſe. This he ſold to Vaillant for one hundred and twenty pounds. The firſt ſale was not great, and it is now loſt in forgetfulneſs.

Mallet, by addreſs or accident, perhaps by his dependance on the prince, found his way to Bolingbroke; a man whoſe pride and petulance made his kindneſs difficult to gain, or keep, and whom Mallet was content to court by an act, which, I hope, was unwillingly performed.—When it was found that Pope had clandeſtinely printed an unauthoriſed number of the pamphlet called *The Patriot King*, Bolingbroke, in a fit of uſeleſs fury, reſolved to blaſt his memory, and employed Mallet (1747) as the executioner of his vengeance. Mallet had not virtue, or had not ſpirit, to refuſe the office; and was rewarded not long after with the legacy of lord Bolingbroke's works.

Many of the political pieces had been written during the oppoſition to Walpole, and given to Franklin, as he ſuppoſed, in perpetuity. Theſe, among the reſt, were claimed by the will. The queſtion was referred to arbitrators; but when they decided againſt Mallet, he refuſed to yield to the award; and by the help of Millar the bookſeller, publiſhed all that he could find, but with ſucceſs very much below his expectations.

In 1753, his maſque of *Britannia* was acted at Drury-Lane, and his tragedy of *Elvira* in 1763; in which year he was appointed keeper of the book of Entries for ſhips in the port of London.

In the beginning of the laſt war, when the nation was exaſperated by ill ſucceſs, he was employed to turn the public vengeance upon Byng, and wrote a Letter of accuſation under the character of a *Plain Man*. The paper was with great induſtry circulated and diſperſed; and he, for his ſeaſonable intervention, had a conſiderable penſion beſtowed upon him, which he retained to his death.

Towards the end of his life he went with his wife to France; but after a while, finding his health declining, he returned alone to England, and died in April 1765.

He was twice married, and by his firſt wife had ſeveral children. One daughter, who married an Italian of rank, named Cileſia, wrote a tragedy called *Almida*, which was acted at Drury-Lane. His ſecond wife was the daughter of a nobleman's ſteward, who had a conſiderable fortune, which ſhe took care to retain in her own hands.

His ſtature was diminutive, but he was regularly formed; his appearance, till he grew corpulent, was agreeable, and he ſuffered it to want no recommendation that dreſs could give it. His converſation was elegant and eaſy. The reſt of his character may, without injury to his memory, ſink into ſilence.

As a writer he cannot be placed in any high claſs.—There is no ſpecies of compoſition in which he was eminent. His Dramas had their day, a ſhort day, and are forgotten: his blank verſe ſeems to my ear the echo of Thomſon. His Life of Bacon is known as it is appended to Bacon's volumes, but is no longer mentioned. His works are ſuch as a writer, buſtling in the world, ſhewing himſelf in public, and emerging occaſionally from time to time into notice, might keep alive by his perſonal influence; but which, conveying little information, and giving no great pleaſure, muſt ſoon give way, as the ſucceſſion of things produces new topics of converſation, and other modes of amuſement.

AKENSIDE.

MARK AKENSIDE was born on the ninth of November, 1721, at Newcaſtle upon Tyne. His father, Mark, was a butcher of the Preſbyterian ſect; his mother's name was Mary Lumſden. He received the firſt part of his education at the grammar-ſchool of Newcaſtle; and was afterwards inſtructed by Mr. Wilſon, who kept a private academy.

At the age of eighteen he was ſent to Edinburgh, that he might qualify himſelf for the office of a diſſenting miniſter, and received ſome aſſiſtance from the fund which the Diſſenters employ in educating young men of ſcanty fortune. But a wider view of the world opened other ſcenes, and prompted other hopes: he determined to ſtudy phyſic, and repaid that contribution, which, being received for a different purpoſe, he juſtly thought it diſhonourable to retain.

Whether, when he reſolved not to be a diſſenting miniſter, he ceaſed to be a Diſſenter, I know not. He certainly retained an unneceſſary and outrageous zeal for what he called and thought liberty; a zeal which ſometimes diſguiſes from the world, and not rarely from the mind which it poſſeſſes, an envious deſire of plundering wealth or degrading greatneſs; and of which the immediate tendency is innovation and anarchy, an impetuous eagerneſs to ſubvert and confound, with very little care what ſhall be eſtabliſhed.

Akenſide was one of thoſe poets who have felt very early the motions of genius, and one of thoſe ſtudents who have very early ſtored their memories with ſentiments and images. Many of his performances were produced in his youth; and his greateſt work, *The Pleaſures of Imagination*, appeared in 1744. I have heard Dodſley, by whom it was publiſhed, relate, that when the copy was offered him, the price demanded for it, which was an hundred

and twenty pounds, being such as he was not inclined to give precipitately. He carried the work to Pope, who, having looked into it, advised him not to make a niggardly offer; for *this was no every-day writer.*

In 1741 he went to Leyden, in pursuit of medical knowledge; and three years afterwards (May 16, 1744) became doctor of physic, having, according to the custom of the Dutch Universities, published a thesis, or dissertation. The subject which he chose was *the Original and Growth of the Human Fœtus*; in which he is said to have departed, with great judgment, from the opinion then established, and to have delivered that which has been since confirmed and received.

Akenside was a young man, warm with every notion that by nature or accident had been connected with the sound of liberty, and by an excentricity which such dispositions do not easily avoid, a lover of contradiction, and no friend to any thing established. He adopted Shaftesbury's foolish assertion of the efficacy of ridicule for the discovery of truth. For this he was attacked by Warburton, and defended by Dyson; Warburton afterwards reprinted his remarks at the end of his dedication to the Freethinkers.

The result of all the arguments which have been produced in a long and eager discussion of this idle question, may easily be collected. If ridicule be applied to any position as the test of truth, it will then become a question whether such ridicule be just; and this can only be decided by the application of truth, as the test of ridicule. Two men, fearing, one a real and the other a fancied danger, will be for a while equally exposed to the inevitable consequences of cowardice, contemptuous censure, and ludicrous representation; and the true state of both cases must be known, before it can be decided whose terror is rational, and whose is ricículous; who is to be pitied, and who to be despised. Both are for a while equally exposed to laughter, but both are not therefore equally contemptible.

In the revisal of this poem, which he died before he had finished, he omitted the lines which had given occasion to Warburton's objections.

He published, soon after his return from Leyden (1745) his first collection of odes; and was impelled by his rage of patriotism to write a very acrimonious epistle to Pulteney, whom he stigmatizes, under the name of Curio, as the betrayer of his country.

Being now to live by his profeſſion, he firſt commenced phyſician at Northampton, where Dr. Stonehouſe then practiſed, with ſuch reputation and ſucceſs, that a ſtranger was not likely to gain ground upon him. Akenſide tried the conteſt a while; and, having deafened the place with clamours for liberty, removed to Hampſtead, where he reſided more than two years, and then fixed himſelf in London, the proper place for a man of accompliſhments like his.

At London he was known as a poet, but was ſtill to make his way as a phyſician; and would perhaps have been reduced to great exigencies, but that Mr. Dyſon, with an ardour of friendſhip that has not many examples, allowed him three hundred pounds a year. Thus ſupported, he advanced gradually in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice, or eminence of popularity. A phyſician in a great city ſeems to be the mere play-thing of fortune; his degree of reputation is, for the moſt part, totally caſual: they that employ him, know not his excellence; they that reject him, know not his deficience. By an accute obſerver, who had looked on the tranſactions of the medical world for half a century, a very curious book might be written on the *Fortune of Phyſicians*.

Akenſide appears not to have been wanting to his own ſucceſs: he placed himſelf in view by all the common methods; he became a Fellow of the Royal Society; he obtained a degree at Cambridge, and was admitted into the College of Phyſicians; he wrote little poetry, but publiſhed, from time to time, medical eſſays and obſervations; he became phyſician to St. Thomas's Hoſpital; he read the Gulſtonian Lectures in Anatomy; but began to give, for the Crounian Lecture, a hiſtory of the revival of Learning, from which he ſoon deſiſted; and, in converſation, he very eagerly forced himſelf into notice by an ambitious oſtentation of elegance and literature.

His Diſcourſe on the Dyſentery (1764) was conſidered as a very conſpicous ſpecimen of Latinity, which entitled him to the ſame height of place among the ſcholars as he poſſeſſed before among the wits; and he might perhaps have riſen to a greater elevation of character, but that his ſtudies was ended with his life, by a putrid fever, June 23, 1770, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

AKENSIDE is to be considered as a didactic and lyric poet. His great work is the *Pleasures of Imagination*; a performance which, published, as it was, at the age of twenty-three, raised expectations that were not afterwards very amply satisfied. It has undoubtedly a just claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquisitions, of a young mind stored with images, and much exercised in combining and comparing them.

With the philosophical or religious tenets of the author I have nothing to do; my business is with his poetry. The subject is well chosen, as it includes all images that can strike or please, and thus comprises every species of poetical delight. The only difficulty is in the choice of examples and illustrations, and it is not easy in such exuberance of matter to find the middle point between penury and satiety. The parts seem artificially disposed, with sufficient coherence, so as that they cannot change their places without injury to the general design.

His images are displayed with such luxuriance of expression, that they are hidden, like Butler's Moon, by a *Veil of Light*; they are forms fantastically lost under superfluity of dress. *Pars minima est ipsa Puella sui.* The words are multiplied till the sense is hardly perceived; attention deserts the mind, and settles in the ear. The reader wanders through the gay diffusion, sometimes amazed, and sometimes delighted; but, after many turnings in the flowery labyrinth, comes out as he went in. He remarked little, and laid hold on nothing.

To his versification justice requires that praise should not be denied. In the general fabrication of his lines he is perhaps superior to any other writer of blank verse; his flow is smooth, and his pauses are musical; but the concatenation of his verses is commonly too long continued, and the full close does not recur with sufficient frequency. The sense is carried on through a long intertexture of complicated clauses, and as nothing is distinguished, nothing is remembered.

The exemption which blank verse affords from the necessity of closing the sense with the couplet, betrays luxuriant and active minds into such self indulgence, that they pile image upon image, ornament upon ornament, and are not easily persuaded to close the sense at all. Blank verse

will therefore, I fear, be too often found in deſcription exuberant, in argument loquacious, and in narration tireſome.

His diction is certainly poetical as it is not proſaic, and elegant as it is not vulgar. He is to be commended as having fewer artifices of diſguſt than moſt of his brethren of the blank ſong. He rarely either recalls old phraſes or twiſts his metre into harſh inverſions. The ſenſe however of his words is ſtrained; when *he views the* Ganges *from* Alpine *heights*; that is, from mountains like the Alps. And the pedant ſurely intrudes, but when was blank verſe without pedantry? when he tells how *Planets absolve the stated round of Time.*

It is generally known to the readers of poetry that he intended to reviſe and augment this work, but died before he had completed his deſign. The reformed work as he left it, and the additions which he had made, are very properly retained in the late collection. He ſeems to have ſomewhat contracted his diffuſion; but I know not whether he has gained in cloſeneſs what he has loſt in ſplendour. In the additional book, the *Tale of Solon*, is too long.

One great defect of this poem is very properly cenſured by Mr. Walker, unleſs it may be ſaid in his defence, that what he has omitted was not properly in his plan. "His picture of man is grand and beautiful, but unfiniſhed. The immortality of the ſoul, which is the natural conſequence of the appetites and powers ſhe is inveſted with, is ſcarcely once hinted throughout the poem. This deficiency is amply ſupplied by the maſterly pencil of Dr. Young; who like a good philoſopher, has invincibly proved the immortality of man, from the grandeur of his conceptions, and the meanneſs and miſery of his ſtate; for this reaſon, a few paſſages are ſelected from the *Night Thoughts*, which, with thoſe from Akenſide, ſeem to form a complete view of the powers, ſituation and end of man." *Exercises for improvement in Elocution*, p. 66.

His other poems are now to be conſidered; but a ſhort conſideration will diſpatch them. It is not eaſy to gueſs why he addicted himſelf ſo diligently to lyric poetry, having neither the eaſe and airneſs of the lighter, nor the vehemence and elevation of the grander ode. When he lays his ill-fated hand upon his harp, his former powers ſeem to deſert him; he has no longer his luxuriance of expreſſion, nor variety of images. His thoughts are cold, and his words inelegant. Yet ſuch was his love of lyrics, that ha-

ving written with great vigour and poignancy his *Epistle to Curio*, he transformed it afterwards into an ode disgraceful only to its author.

Of his odes nothing favourable can be said; the sentiments commonly want force, nature, or novelty; the diction is sometimes harsh and uncouth, the stanzas ill-constructed and unpleasant, and the rhymes dissonant, or unskilfully disposed, too distant from each other, or arranged with too little regard to established use, and therefore perplexing to the ear, which in a short composition has not time to grow familiar with an innovation.

To examine such compositions singly, cannot be required; they have doubtless brighter and darker parts: but when they are once found to be generally dull, all further labour may be spared; for to what use can the work be criticised that will not be read?

GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY, the ſon of Mr. Phillip Gray, a ſcrivener of London, was born in Cornhill, November 26, 1716. His grammatical education he received at Eton under the care of Mr. Antrobus, his mother's brother, then aſſiſtant to Dr. George; and when he left ſchool, in 1734, entered a penſioner at Peterhouſe in Cambridge.

The tranſition from the ſchool to the college is, to moſt young ſcholars, the time from which they date their years of manhood, liberty, and happineſs; but Gray ſeems to have been very little delighted with academical gratifications; he liked at Cambridge neither the mode of life nor the faſhion of ſtudy, and lived ſullenly on to the time when his attendance on lectures was no longer required. As he intended to profeſs the Common Law, he took no degree.

When he had been at Cambridge about five years, Mr. Horace Walpole, whoſe friendſhip he had gained at Eton, invited him to travel with him as his companion. They wandered through France into Italy; and Gray's Letters contain a very pleaſing account of many parts of their journey. But unequal friendſhips are eaſily diſſolved: at Florence they quarrelled, and parted; and Mr. Walpole is now content to have it told that it was by his fault. If we look however without prejudice on the world, we ſhall find that men, whoſe conſciouſneſs of their own merit ſets them above the compliances of ſervility, are apt enough in their aſſociation with ſuperiors to watch their own dignity with troubleſome and punctilious jealouſy, and in the favour of independence to exact that attention which they refuſe to pay. Part they did, whatever was the quarrel, and the reſt of their travels was doubtleſs more unpleaſant to them both. Gray continued his journey in a manner ſuitable to his own little fortune, with only an occaſional ſervant.

He returned to England in September 1741, and in about two months afterwards buried his father; who had, by an injudicious waſte of money upon a new houſe, ſo much leſ-

ſened his fortune, that Gray thought himſelf too poor to ſtudy the law. He therefore retired to Cambridge, where he ſoon after became Bachelor of Civil Law; and where, without liking the place or its inhabitants, or profeſſing to like them, he paſſed, except a ſhort reſidence at London, the reſt of his life.

About this time he was deprived of Mr. Weſt, the ſon of a chancellor of Ireland, a friend on whom he appears to have ſet a high value, and who deſerved his eſteem by the powers which he ſhews in his Letters, and in the Ode to *May*, which Mr. Maſon has preſerved, as well as by the ſincerity with which, when Gray ſent him part of *Agrippina*, a tragedy that he had juſt begun, he gave an opinion which probably intercepted the progreſs of the work, and which the judgment of every reader will confirm. It was certainly no loſs to the Engliſh ſtage that *Agrippina* was never finiſhed.

In this year (1742) Gray ſeems firſt to have applied himſelf ſeriouſly to poetry; for in this year were produced the *Ode to Spring*, his *Proſpect of Eton*, and his *Ode to Adverſity*. He began likewiſe a Latin poem, *de Principiis cogitandi*.

It may be collected from the narrative of Mr. Maſon, that his firſt ambition was to have excelled in Latin poetry: perhaps it were reaſonable to wiſh that he had proſecuted his deſign; for though there is at preſent ſome embarraſſment in his phraſe, and ſome harſhneſs in his Lyric numbers, his copiouſneſs of language is ſuch as very few poſſeſs; and his lines, even when imperfect, diſcover a writer whom practice would quickly have made ſkilful.

He now lived on at Peterhouſe, very little ſolicitous what others did or thought, and cultivated his mind and enlarged his views without any other purpoſe than of improving and amuſing himſelf; when Mr. Maſon, being elected fellow of Pembroke-hall, brought him a companion who was afterwards to be his editor, and whoſe fondneſs and fidelity has kindled in him a zeal of admiration, which cannot be reaſonably expected from the neutrality of a ſtranger, and the coldneſs of a critic.

In this retirement he wrote (1747) an ode on the *Death of Mr. Walpole's Cat*; and the year afterwards attempted a poem of more importance, on *Government and Education*, of which the fragments which remain have many excellent lines.

His next production (1750) was his far-famed *Elegy in the Church-yard*, which, finding its way into a Magazine, firſt, I believe, made him known to the public.

An invitation from lady Cobham about this time gave occaſion to an odd compoſition called *a Long Story*, which adds little to Gay's character.

Several of his pieces were publiſhed (1753), with deſigns, by Mr. Bentley; and that they might in ſome form or other make a book, only one ſide of each leaf was printed. I believe the poems and the plates recommended each other ſo well, that the whole impreſſion was ſoon bought. This year he loſt his mother.

Some time afterwards (1756) ſome young men of the college, whoſe chambers were near his, diverted themſelves with diſturbing him by frequent and troubleſome noiſes, and, as is ſaid, by pranks yet more offenſive and contemptuous. This inſolence, having endured it a while, he repreſented to the governors of the ſociety, among whom perhaps he had no friends; and, finding his complaint little regarded, removed himſelf to Pembroke-hall.

In 1757 he publiſhed *The Progress of Poetry* and *The Bard*, two compoſitions at which the readers of poetry were at firſt content to gaze in mute amazement. Some that tried them confeſſed the inability to underſtand them, though Warburton ſaid that they were underſtood as well as the works of Milton and Shakſpeare, which it is the faſhion to admire. Garrick wrote a few lines in their praiſe. Some hardy champions undertook to reſcue them from neglect, and in a ſhort time many were content to be ſhewn beauties which they could not ſee.

Gray's reputation was now ſo high, that after the death of Cibber, he had the honour of refuſing the laurel, which was then beſtowed on Mr. Whitehead.

His curioſity, not long after, drew him away from Cambridge to a lodging near the Muſeum, where he reſided near three years, reading and tranſcribing; and, ſo far as can be diſcovered, very little affected by two odes on *Oblivion* and *Obſcurity*, in which his lyric performances were ridiculed with much contempt and much ingenuity.

When the Profeſſor of Modern Hiſtory at Cambridge died, he was, as he ſays, *cockered and ſpirited up*, till he aſked it of lord Bute, who ſent him a civil refuſal; and the

place was given to Mr. Brocket, the tutor of Sir James Lowther.

His conſtitution was weak, and believing that his health was prompted by exerciſe and change of place, he undertook (1765) a journey into Scotland, of which his account, ſo far as it extends, is very curious and elegant; for as his comprehenſion was ample, his curioſity extended to all the works of art, all the appearances of nature, and all the monuments of paſt events. He naturally contracted a friendſhip with Dr. Beattie, whom he found a poet, a philoſopher, and a good man. The Mareſchal College at Aberdeen offered him the degree of Doctor of Laws, which, having omitted to take it at Cambridge, he thought it decent to refuſe.

What he had formerly ſolicited in vain, was at laſt given him without ſolicitation. The Profeſſorſhip of Hiſtory became again vacant, and he received (1768) an offer of it from the duke of Grafton. He accepted, and retained it to his death; always deſigning lectures, but never reading them; uneaſy at his neglect of duty, and appeaſing his uneaſineſs with deſigns of reformation, and with a reſolution which he believed himſelf to have made of reſigning the office, if he found himſelf unable to diſcharge it.

Ill health made another journey neceſſary, and he viſited (1769) Weſtmoreland and Cumberland. He that reads his epiſtolary narration wiſhes, that to travel, and to tell his travels, had been more of his employment; but it is by ſtudying at home that we muſt obtain the ability of travelling with intelligence and improvement.

His travels and his ſtudies were now near their end. The gout, of which he had ſuſtained many weak attacks, fell upon his ſtomach, and yielding to no medicines, produced ſtrong convulſions, which (July 30, 1771) terminated in death.

His character I am willing to adopt, as Mr. Maſon has done, from a Letter written to my friend Mr. Boſwell, by the Rev. Mr. Temple, rector of St. Gluvias in Cornwall; and am as willing as his warmeſt well-wiſher to believe it true.

"Perhaps he was the moſt learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and profound parts of ſcience, and that not ſuperficially but thoroughly. He knew every branch of hiſtory, both natural and civil; had read all the original hiſtorians of England, France, and

Italy; and was a great antiquarian. Criticiſm, metaphyſics, morals, politics, made a principal part of his ſtudy; voyages and travels of all ſorts were his favourite amuſements; and he had a fine taſte in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. With ſuch a fund of knowledge, his converſation muſt have been equally inſtructing and entertaining; but he was alſo a good man, a man of virtue and humanity. There is no character without ſome ſpeck, ſome imperfection; and I think the greateſt defect in his was an affectation in delicacy, or rather effeminacy, and a viſible faſtidiouſneſs, or contempt and diſdain of his inferiors in ſcience. He alſo had, in ſome degree, that weakneſs which diſguſted Voltaire ſo much in Congreve: tho' he ſeemed to value others chiefly according to the progreſs they had made in knowledge, yet he could not bear to be conſidered himſelf merely as a man of letters; and though without birth, or fortune, or ſtation, his deſire was to be looked upon as a private independent gentleman, who read for his amuſement. Perhaps it may be ſaid, What ſignifies ſo much knowledge, when it produced ſo little? Is it worth taking ſo much pains to leave no memorial but a few poems? But let it be conſidered that Mr. Gray was, to others, at leaſt innocently employed; to himſelf, certainly beneficially. His time paſſed agreeably; he was every day making ſome new acquiſition in ſcience; his mind was enlarged, his heart ſoftened, his virtue ſtrengthened; the world and mankind were ſhewn to him without a maſk; and he was taught to conſider every thing as trifling, and unworthy of the attention of a wiſe man, except the purſuit of knowledge and practice of virtue, in that ſtate wherein God hath placed us."

To this character Mr. Maſon has added a more particular account of Gray's ſkill in zoology. He has remarked, that Gray's effeminacy was affected moſt *before thoſe whom he did not wiſh to please;* and that he is unjuſtly charged with making knowledge his ſole reaſon of preference, as he paid his eſteem to none whom he did not likewiſe believe to be good.

What has occurred to me, from the ſlight inſpection of his Letters in which my undertaking has engaged me, is, that his mind had a large graſp; that his curioſity was unlimited, and his judgment cultivated; that he was a man likely to love much where he loved at all, but that he was faſtidious and hard to pleaſe. His contempt however is of-

ten employed, where I hope it will be approved, upon ſcepticiſm and infidelity. His ſhort account of Shaftſbury I will inſert.

"You ſay you cannot conceive how lord Shafteſbury came to be a philoſopher in vogue; I will tell you: firſt, he was a lord; ſecondly, he was as vain as any of his readers; thirdly, men are very prone to believe what they do not underſtand; fourthly, they will believe any thing at all, provided they are under no obligation to believe it; fifthly, they love to take a new road, even when that road leads no where; ſixthly, he was reckoned a fine writer, and ſeems always to mean more than he ſaid. Would you have any more reaſons? An interval of above forty years has pretty well deſtroyed the charm. A dead lord ranks with commoners: vanity is no longer intereſted in the matter; for a new road is become an old one."

Mr. Maſon has added, from his own knowledge, that though Gray was poor, he was not eager of money; and that, out of the little that he had, he was very willing to help the neceſſitous.

As a writer he had this peculiarity, that he did not write his pieces firſt rudely, and then correct them, but laboured every line as it aroſe in the train of compoſition; and he had a notion not very peculiar, that he could not write but at certain times, or at happy moments; a fantaſtic foppery to which my kindneſs for a man of learning and of virtue wiſhes him to have been ſuperior.

GRAY's Poetry is now to be conſidered; and I hope not to be looked on as an enemy to his name, if I confeſs that I contemplate it with leſs pleaſure than his life.

His ode on *Spring* has ſomething poetical, both in the language and the thought; but the language is too luxuriant, and the thoughts have nothing new. There has of late ariſen a practice of giving to adjectives, derived from ſubſtantives, the termination of participles; ſuch as the *cultured* plain the *dasied* bank; but I was ſorry to ſee, in the lines of a ſcholar like Gray, the *honied* Spring. The morality is natural, but too ſtale; the concluſion is pretty.

The poem on the *Cat* was doubtleſs by its author conſidered as a trifle, but it is not a happy trifle. In the firſt

ſtanza *the azure flowers* that *blow*, ſhow reſolutely a rhyme is ſometimes made when it cannot eaſily be found. *Selima*, the *Cat* is called a nymph, with ſome violence both to language and ſenſe; but there is good uſe made of it when it is done; for of the two lines,

What female heart can gold deſpiſe?
What cat's averſe to fiſh?

the firſt relates merely to the nymph, and the ſecond only to the cat. The ſixth ſtanza contains a melancholy truth, that *a favourite has no friend;* but the laſt ends in a pointed ſentence of no relation to the purpoſe; if *what glistered* had been *gold*, the cat would not have gone into the water; and if ſhe had, would not leſs have been drowned.

The *Prospect of Eton College* ſuggeſts nothing to Gray, which every beholder does not equally think and feel. His ſupplication to father *Thames*, to tell him who drives the hoop or toſſes the ball is uſeleſs and puerile. Father *Thames* has no better means of knowing than himſelf. His epithet *buxom health* is not elegant; he ſeems not to underſtand the word. Gray thought his language more poetical, as it was more remote from common uſe: finding in Dryden *honey redolent of Spring*, an expreſſion that reaches the utmoſt limits of our language, Gray drove it a little more beyond common apprehenſion, by making *gales* to be *redolent of joy and youth.*

Of the *Ode on Adversity*, the hint was at firſt taken from *O Diva, gratum quæ regis Antium;* but Gray has excelled his original by the variety of his ſentiments, and by their moral application. Of this piece, at once poetical and rational, I will not by ſlight objections violate the dignity.

My proceſs has now brought me to the *wonderful Wonder of Wonders*, the two Siſter Odes; by which, though either vulgar ignorance or common ſenſe at firſt univerſally rejected them, many have been ſince perſuaded to think themſelves delighted. I am one of thoſe that are willing to be pleaſed, and therefore would gladly find the meaning of the firſt ſtanza of the *Progress of Poetry.*

Gray ſeems in his rapture to confound the images of *ſound* and *running water.* A *ſtream of music* may be allowed; but where does *Music*, however *ſmooth and ſtrong*, after having viſited the *verdant vales*, *rowl down the ſteep amain*, ſo as that *rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the*

roar? If this be ſaid of *Muſic*, it is nonſenſe; if it be ſaid of *Water*, it is nothing to the purpoſe.

The ſecond ſtanza, exhibiting Mars's car and Jove's eagle, is unworthy of further notice. Criticiſm diſdains to chaſe a ſchool boy to his common places.

To the third it may likewiſe be objected, that it is drawn from Mythology, though ſuch as may be more eaſily aſſimilated to real life. Idalia's *velvet-green* has ſomething of cant. An epithet or metaphor drawn from Nature ennobles Art; an epithet or metaphor drawn from Art degrades Nature. Gray is too fond of words arbitrarily compounded. *Many twinkling* was formerly cenſured as not analogical; we may ſay *many-ſpotted*, but ſcarcely *many-ſpotting*. This ſtanza, however, has ſomething pleaſing.

Of the ſecond ternary of ſtanzas, the firſt endeavours to tell ſomething; and would have told it, had it not been croſſed by Hyperion: the ſecond deſcribes well enough the univerſal prevalence of Poetry; but I am afraid that the concluſion will not riſe from the premiſes. The caverns of the North and the plains of Chili are not the reſidences of *Glory and generous Shame*. But that Poetry and Virtue go always together is an opinion ſo pleaſing, that I can forgive him who reſolves to think it true.

The third ſtanza ſounds big with *Delphi*, and *Egean*, and *Ilissus*, and *Meander*, and *hallowed fountain* and *ſolemn ſound;* but in all Gray's odes there is a kind of cumbrous ſplendour which we wiſh away. His poſition is at laſt falſe: in the time of Dante and Petrarch, from whom he derives our firſt ſchool of Poetry, Italy was over-run by *tyrant power* and *coward vice;* nor was our ſtate much better when we firſt borrowed the Italian arts.

Of the third ternary, the firſt gives a mythological birth of Shakſpeare. What is ſaid of that mighty genius is true; but it is not ſaid happily; the real effects of this poetical power are put out of ſight by the pomp of machinery. Where truth is ſufficient to fill the mind, fiction is worſe than uſeleſs; the counterfeit debaſes the genuine.

His account of Milton's blindneſs, if we ſuppoſe it cauſed by ſtudy in the formation of his poem, a ſuppoſition ſurely allowable, is poetically true, and happily imagined. But the *car* of Dryden, with his *two coursers*, has nothing in it peculiar; it is a car in which any other rider may be placed.

The Bard appears, at the firſt view, to be, as Algarotti and others have remarked, an imitation of the prophecy of Nereus. Algarotti thinks it ſuperior to its original, and, if preference depends only on the imagery and animation of the two poems, his judgment is right. There is in *The Bard* more force, more thought, and more variety. But to copy is leſs than to invent, and the copy has been unhappily produced at a wrong time. The fiction of Horace was to the Romans credible; but its revival diſguſts us with apparent and unconquerable falſehood. *Incredulus odi.*

To ſelect a ſingular event, and ſwell it to a giant's bulk by fabulous appendages of ſpectres and predictions, has little difficulty, for he that forſakes the probable may always find the marvellous. And it has little uſe; we are affected only as we believe; we are improved only as we find ſomething to be imitated or declined. I do not ſee that *The Bard* promotes any truth, moral or political.

His ſtanzas are too long, eſpecially his epodes; the ode is finiſhed before the ear has learned its meaſures, and conſequently before it can receive pleaſure from their conſonance and recurrence.

Of the firſt ſtanza the abrupt beginning has been celebrated; but technical beauties can give praiſe only to the inventor. It is in the power of any man to ruſh abruptly upon his ſubject, that has read the ballad of *Johnny Armſtrong*.

Is there ever a man in all Scotland—

The initial reſemblances, or alliterations, *ruin, ruthleſs helm or hauberk*, are below the grandeur of a poem that endeavours at ſublimity.

In the ſecond ſtanza the *Bard* is well deſcribed; but in the third we have the puerilities of obſolete mythology. When we are told that *Cadwallo hush'd the ſtormy main*, and that *Modred* made *huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud top'd head*, attention recoils from the repetition of a tale that, even when it was firſt heard, was heard with ſcorn.

The *weaving* of the *winding ſheet* he borrowed, as he owns, from the northern Bards; but their texture, however, was very properly the work of female powers, as the art of ſpinning the thread of life in another mythology. Theft is always dangerous; Gray has made weavers of his ſlaughtered bards, by a fiction outrageous and incongruous. They are then called upon to *Weave the warp,*

and weave the woof, perhaps with no great propriety; for it is by croſſing the *woof* with the *warp* that men *weave* the *web* or piece; and the firſt line was dearly bought by the admiſſion of its wretched correſpondent, *Give ample room and verge enough.* He has, however, no other line as bad.

The third ſtanza of the ſecond ternary is commended, I think, beyond its merit. The perſonification is indiſtinct. *Thirst* and *Hunger* are not alike; and their features, to make the imagery perfect, ſhould have been diſcriminated. We are told, in the ſame ſtanza, how *towers* are *fed.* But I will no longer look for particular faults; yet let it be obſerved, that the ode might have been concluded with an action of better example; but ſuicide is always to be had, without expence of thought.

Theſe odes are marked by glittering accumulations of ungraceful ornaments; they ſtrike, rather than pleaſe; the images are magnified by affectation; the language is laboured into harſhneſs. The mind of the writer ſeems to work with unnatural violence, *Double, double, toil and trouble.* He has a kind of ſtruting dignity, and is tall by walking on tiptoe. His art and his ſtruggle are too viſible, and there is too little appearance of eaſe and nature.

To ſay that he has no beauties, would be unjuſt: a man like him, of great learning and great induſtry, could not but produce ſomething valuable. When he pleaſes leaſt, it can only be ſaid that a good deſign was ill directed.

His tranſlations of Northern and Welſh Poetry deſerve praiſe: the imagery is preſerved, perhaps often improved; but the language is unlike the language of other poets.

In the character of his Elegy I rejoice to concur with the common reader: for by the common ſenſe of readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of ſubtilty and the dogmatiſm of learning, muſt be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The *Church-yard* abounds with images which find a mirrour in every mind, and with ſentiments to which every boſom returns an echo. The four ſtanzas beginning *Yet even these bones*, are to me original: I have never ſeen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here, perſuades himſelf that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and uſeleſs to praiſe him.

LYTTELTON.

GEORGE LYTTELTON, the ſon of Sir Thomas Lyttelton of Hagley in Worceſterſhire, was born in 1709. He was educated at Eton, where he was ſo much diſtinguiſhed that his exerciſes were recommended as models to his ſchool-fellows.

From Eton he went to Chriſt-church, where he retained the ſame reputation of ſuperiority, and diſplayed his abilities to the public in a poem on *Blenheim*.

He was a very early writer, both in verſe and proſe.—His *Progress of Love*, and his *Perſian Letters*, were both written when he was very young; and, indeed, the character of a young man is very viſible in both. The Verſes cant of ſhepherds and flocks, and crooks dreſſed with flowers; and the Letters have ſomething of that indiſtinct and headſtrong ardour for liberty which a man of genius always catches when he enters the world, and always ſuffers to cool as he paſſes forward.

He ſtaid not long at Oxford; for in 1728 he began his travels, and ſaw France and Italy. When he returned, he obtained a ſeat in parliament, and ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf among the moſt eager opponents of Sir Robert Walpole, though his father, who was commiſſioner of the Admiralty, always voted with the Court.

For many years the name of George Lyttleton was ſeen in every account of every debate in the Houſe of Commons. He oppoſed the ſtanding army; he oppoſed the exciſe; he ſupported the motion for petitioning the King to remove Walpole. His zeal was conſidered by the courtiers not only as violent, but as acrimonious and malignant; and when Walpole was at laſt hunted from his places, every effort was made by his friends, and many friends he had, to exclude Lyttelton from the Secret Committee.

The Prince of Wales, being (1737) driven from St. James's, kept a ſeparate court, and opened his arms to the opponents of the miniſtry. My Lyttelton became his ſecretary, and was ſuppoſed to have great influence in the direction of his conduct. He perſuaded his maſter, whoſe buſineſs it was now to be popular, that he would advance his character by patronage. Mallet was made under-ſecretary, with 200*l.* and Thomſon had a penſion of 100*l.* a year. For Thomſon Lyttelton always retained his kindneſs, and was able at laſt to place him at eaſe.

Moore courted his favour by an apologetical poem, called *The Trial of Selim*, for which he was paid with kind words, which, as is common, raiſed great hopes, that at laſt were diſappointed.

Lyttelton now ſtood in the firſt rank of oppoſition; and Pope, who was incited, it is not eaſy to ſay how, to increaſe the clamour againſt the miniſtry, commended him among the other patriots. This drew upon him the reproaches of Fox, who, in the houſe, imputed to him as a crime his intimacy with a lampooner ſo unjuſt and licentious. Lyttelton ſupported his friend, and replied, that he thought it an honour to be received into the familiarity of ſo great a poet.

While he was thus conſpicuous, he married (1741) Miſs Lucy Forteſcue of Devonſhire, by whom he had a ſon, the late lord Lyttelton, and two daughters, and with whom he appears to have lived in the higheſt degree of connubial felicity: but human pleaſures are ſhort; ſhe died in childbed about five years afterwards, and he ſolaced his grief by writing a long poem to her memory.

He did not however condemn himſelf to perpetual ſolitude and ſorrow; for, after awhile, he was content to ſeek happineſs again by a ſecond marriage with the daughter of Sir Robert Rich; but the experiment was unſucceſsful.

At length, after a long ſtruggle, Walpole gave way, and honour and profit were diſtributed among his conquerors. Lyttelton was made (1744) one of the Lords of the Treaſury; and from that time was engaged in ſupporting the ſchemes of the miniſtry.

Politics did not, however, ſo much engage him as to withhold his thoughts from things of more importance. He had, in the pride of juvenile confidence, with the help of corrupt converſation, entertained doubts of the truth of Chriſtianity; but he thought the time now come when it

was no longer fit to doubt or believe by chance, and applied himself seriously to the great question. His studies being honest, ended in conviction. He found that religion was true, and what he had learned he endeavoured to teach (1747), by *Observations on the Conversion of St. Paul*; a treatise to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer. This book his father had the happiness of seeing, and expressed his pleasure in a letter which deserves to be inserted.

"I have read your religious treatise with infinite pleasure and satisfaction. The style is fine and clear, the arguments close, cogent, and irresistible. May the King of kings, whose glorious cause you have so well defended, reward your pious labours, and grant that I may be found worthy, through the merits of Jesus Christ, to be an eye-witness of that happiness which I don't doubt he will bountifully bestow upon you. In the mean time, I shall never cease glorifying God, for having endowed you with such useful talents, and giving me so good a son.

"Your affectionate father,

"THOMAS LYTTELTON."

A few years afterwards (1751) by the death of his father he inherited a baronet's title with a large estate, which, though perhaps he did not augment, he was careful to adorn, by a house of great elegance and expence, and by much attention to the decoration of his park.

As he continued his activity in parliament, he was gradually advancing his claim to profit and preferment; and accordingly was made in time (1754) cofferer and privy counsellor: this place he exchanged next year for the great office of chancellor of the exchequer; an office, however, that required some qualifications which he soon perceived himself to want.

The year after, his curiosity led him into Wales: of which he has given an account, perhaps rather with too much affectation of delight, to Archibald Bower, a man of whom he had conceived an opinion more favourable than he seems to have deserved, and whom, having once espoused his interest and fame, he never was persuaded to disown. Bower, whatever was his moral character, did not want abilities; attacked as he was by an universal outcry, and that outcry, as it seems, the echo of truth, he kept his

ground; at last, when his defences began to fail him, he sallied out upon his adversaries, and his adversaries retreated.

About this time Lyttelton published his *Dialogues of the Dead*, which were very eagerly read, though the production rather, as it seems, of leisure than of study, rather effusions than compositions. The names of his persons too often enable the reader to anticipate their conversation; and when they have met, they too often part without any conclusion. He has copied *Fenelon* more than *Fontenelle*.

When they were first published, they were kindly commended by the *Critical Reviewers*; and poor Lyttelton, with humble gratitude, returned, in a note which I have read, acknowledgments which can never be proper, since they must be paid either for flattery or for justice.

When in the latter part of the last reign, the inauspicious commencement of the war made the dissolution of the ministry unavoidable, Sir George Lyttelton, losing with the rest his employment, was recompensed with a peerage; and rested from political turbulence in the House of Lords.

His last literary production was his *History of Henry the Second*, elaborated by the searches and deliberations of twenty years, and published with such anxiety as only vanity can dictate.

The story of this publication is remarkable. The whole work was printed twice over, a great part of it three times and many sheets four or five times. The booksellers paid for the first impression; but the charges and repeated operations of the press were at the expence of the author, whose ambitious accuracy is known to have cost him at least a thousand pounds. He began to print in 1755. Three volumes appeared in 1764, a second edition of them in 1767, a third edition in 1768, and the conclusion in 1771.

Andrew Reid, a man not without considerable abilities, and not unacquainted with letters or with life, undertook to persuade Lyttelton, as he had persuaded himself, that he was master of the secret of punctuation; and, as fear begets credulity, he was employed, I know not at what price, to point the pages of *Henry the Second*. The book was at last pointed and printed, and sent into the world. Lyttelton took money for his copy, of which, when he had paid the *Pointer*, he probably gave the rest away; for he was very liberal to the indigent.

When time brought the Hiſtory to a third edition, Reid was either dead or diſcarded; and the ſuperintendence of typography and punctuation was committed to a man originally a comb-maker, but then known by the ſtyle of Doctor. Something uncommon was probably expected, and ſomething uncommon was at laſt done; for to the Doctor's edition is appended, what the world had already ſeen before, a liſt of errors in nineteen pages.

But to politics and literature there muſt be an end. Lord Lyttelton had never the appearance of a ſtrong or of a healthy man; he had a ſlender uncompacted frame, and a meagre face: he laſted however ſixty years, and was then ſeized with his laſt illneſs. Of his death a very affecting and inſtructive account has been given by his phyſician, which will ſpare me the taſk of his moral character.

"On Sunday evening the ſymptoms of his lordſhip's diſorder, which for a week paſt had alarmed us, put on a fatal appearance, and his lordſhip believed himſelf to be a dying man. From this time he ſuffered by reſtleſſneſs rather than pain; though his nerves were apparently much fluttered, his mental faculties never ſeemed ſtronger, when he was thoroughly awake.

"His lordſhip's bilious and hepatic complaints ſeemed alone not equal to the expected mournful event; his long want of ſleep, whether the conſequence of the irritation in the bowels, or, which is more probable, of cauſes of a different kind, accounts for his loſs of ſtrength, and for his death, very ſufficiently.

"Though his lordſhip wiſhed his approaching diſſolution not to be lingering, he waited for it with reſignation. He ſaid, 'It is a folly, a keeping me in miſery, now to attempt to prolong life;' yet he was eaſily perſuaded, for the ſatisfaction of others, to do or take any thing thought proper for him. On Saturday he had been remarkably better, and we were not without ſome hopes of his recovery.

"On Sunday, about eleven in the fournoon, his lordſhip ſent for me, and ſaid he felt a great hurry, and wiſhed to have a little converſation with me in order to divert it. He then proceeded to open the fountain of the heart, from whence goodneſs had ſo long flowed as from a copious ſpring. 'Doctor,' ſaid he, 'you ſhall be my confeſſor: when I firſt ſet out in the world, I had friends who endeavoured to ſhake my belief in the Chriſtian religion. I ſaw difficulties which ſtaggered me; but I kept my mind open

to conviction. The evidences and doctrines of Chriſtianity, ſtudied with attention, made me a moſt firm and perſuaded believer of the Chriſtian religion. I have made it the rule of my life, and it is the ground of my future hopes. I have erred and ſinned; but have repented, and never indulged any vicious habit. In politics, and public life, I have made public good the rule of my conduct. I never gave counſels which I did not at the time think the beſt. I have ſeen that I was ſometimes in the wrong, but I did not err deſignedly. I have endeavoured, in private life, to do all the good in my power, and never for a moment could indulge malicious or unjuſt deſigns upon any perſon whatſoever.'

"At another time he ſaid, 'I muſt leave my ſoul in the ſame ſtate it was in before this illneſs; I find this a very inconvenient time for ſolicitude about any thing.'

"On the evening, when the ſymptoms of death came on, he ſaid, 'I ſhall die; but it will not be your fault.' When lord and lady Valentia came to ſee his lordſhip, he gave them his ſolemn benediction, and ſaid, 'Be good, be virtuous, my lord; you muſt come to this.' Thus he continued giving his dying benediction to all around him. On Monday morning a lucid interval gave ſome ſmall hopes, but theſe vaniſhed in the evening; and he continued dying, but with very little uneaſineſs, till Tueſday morning, Auguſt 22, when between ſeven and eight o'clock he expired, almoſt without a groan."

His lordſhip was buried at Hagley; and the following inſcription is cut on the ſide of his lady's monument:

"This unadorned ſtone was placed here
By the particular deſire and expreſs
Directions of the Right Honourable
George Lord Lyttelton,
Who died Auguſt 22, 1773, aged 64."

Lord LYTTELTON's Poems are the works of a man of literature and judgment, devoting part of his time to verſification. They have nothing to be deſpiſed, and little to be admired. Of his *Progress of Love*, it is ſufficient blame to ſay that it is paſtoral. His blank verſe in *Blenheim* has neither much force nor much elegance. His lit-

tle performances, whether Songs or Epigrams, are ſometimes ſpritely, and ſometimes inſipid. His epiſtolary pieces have a ſmooth equability, which cannot much tire, becauſe they are ſhort, but which ſeldom *elevates* or *surprizes*. But from this cenſure ought to be excepted his *Advice to Belinda*, which, though for the moſt part written when he was very young, contains much truth and much prudence, very elegantly and vigorouſly expreſſed, and ſhews a mind attentive to life, and a power of poetry which cultivation might have raiſed to excellence.

FINIS.

J. T. GORDON.